

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, August 12, 1976

The SPEAKER (Hon. E. Connelly) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

### PETITION: CAPITAL TAXATION

Dr. TONKIN presented a petition signed by 113 citizens of South Australia, praying that the House would pass legislation to ease the burden of capital taxation and to make it apply equitably.

Petition received.

### PETITION: COFFIN BAY GOLF COURSE

Mr. BLACKER presented a petition signed by 100 residents of South Australia, praying that the House would urge the Minister of Lands to dedicate part of section G, hundred of Lake Wangary, for use as a golf course for Coffin Bay.

Petition received.

### QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following written answers to questions be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

#### SEATON WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL

In reply to the Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL (July 29).

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The proposal to build a new school at Seaton West has been deferred because recent investigations revealed that, if built in the near future, the school would have few pupils. The total expected enrolment of the school, if established immediately, would be about 50 children, and there is little likelihood that this number will be exceeded for some time. The building of the school cannot be justified at this stage. A survey carried out in 1975 showed that 220 primary schoolchildren lived in the area south of Estcourt House and West Lakes shopping centre and north of the Grange railway line. Of these, 137 attended Grange Primary School. At the present participation rate about 120 additional children are likely to be attending Grange Primary School by the end of 1977. The total number of children in the area by 1980 is likely to be about 600. The nearest existing primary school is Grange, and about two-thirds of the above children would be likely to attend that school. The principal has stated that existing accommodation could cater for between 300 and 400 children, provided that accommodation at present used by the Further Education Department is made available when needed. It is the opinion of the Director of Educational Facilities, the Director of Schools, and officers of the Planning Section of the Directorate of Research and Planning that the need for the provision of a new school at Seaton West is substantially less than had hitherto been supposed. It is considered that it would be unjustifiable to proceed with this project at present, and it may well prove that there will never be a need for the construction of the school. The Director-General, Public Buildings Department, has been informed that the

need for the school has been reassessed, as a result of which its priority has diminished to the extent that design work is not proceeding.

### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

In reply to Mr. CHAPMAN (August 5).

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: No doubt there would be some benefits for the tourist industry if the May and September school holidays were staggered. However, for there to be any significant benefits, traditional community attitudes towards holidays in the December-January period would have to be changed, and a co-ordinated system of holidays within industry would have to be developed. From the point of view of the Education Department, the education of pupils is best served by some uniformity of term dates and some overlap with the school holidays of other States. This is also the view of the conference of Directors-General of Education and the Australian Education Council. The overlap of school holidays enables students to participate in interstate sporting carnivals, enables families with children crossing State borders to attend school to be on holidays together, allows children of families moving interstate to transfer with a minimum of interruption to their education, allows intrastate educational activity, and provides opportunities for teachers to participate in interstate conferences and seminars in their own time. A proposed new formula for determining the school year has been well received by the community. This formula places vacations in South Australia slightly more out of phase with other States than does the present formula. However, its impact on the tourist industry would be negligible.

### BANKS INTEGRATION

Dr. TONKIN: Will the Premier say whether the Government still adheres to the platform of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Labor Party on the amalgamation of the State Bank and the Savings Bank of South Australia and the provision of finance, and, if so, what plans has it to implement that platform? That policy is as follows:

Expansion of the State banking system to provide for the amalgamation of the State Bank and the Savings Bank of South Australia and placed under the control of a governor, to be developed along the following lines:

- (a) A State-wide trading bank handling the ordinary business of the community.
- (b) A savings bank performing the ordinary functions of such a bank.
- (c) A hire-purchase department, providing finance for the purchase of farm implements, industrial equipment, motor cars, and domestic appliances at reasonable rates of interest, interest to be payable only on balance of loan outstanding at the end of each month.
- (d) A credit foncier system for the purpose of providing advances to home builders and primary producers.
- (e) All public instrumentalities to bank with the State banking system.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Government's position regarding the State banking system has been clearly stated to the House many times. I noticed that the Leader in some statements to newspapers referred to the nationalisation of the State banking system. I do not know what he is talking about in that respect, as the State Bank has always been owned by the State of South Australia, and the Savings Bank of South Australia was nationalised by the

Playford Government. The Government has made clear that it believes that the two banks owned by it (that is, the State Bank and the Savings Bank of South Australia) should co-operate in their activities in order to provide as effective and extensive a banking system and service for the people of South Australia as they can. I should have thought that the Leader would have subscribed to all those advertisements, which his Party seems previously to have supported, stating that everyone gains from competition between banks.

It is the Labor Government's policy that the State banking system, comprising the State Bank and the Savings Bank of South Australia, should co-operate in order to provide a competitive service with other banking services in South Australia, and to provide that kind of competition that has been advocated by the private banking system. That has been undertaken. In order to provide that co-operation, the Chairman of the State Bank of South Australia (Mr. Seaman), a very respected and able public servant of South Australia who has given most outstanding service to the State under various Governments in the past, is also a member of the Board of the Savings Bank of South Australia. Mr. Bakewell, Chairman of the Savings Bank Board, who is, as the Leader acknowledged yesterday, a very highly respected and effective public servant of the State, is also a member of the State Bank Board.

Co-operation has been developed between the two banking operations to ensure that a full range of banking services is given by their branches and agencies. That is a proper course for South Australia. Apparently, the Leader, in referring to Labor Party policy, is not aware of the services provided by the State banking system in South Australia. He refers to the Government's developing a hire-purchase department: it seems that the Leader does not know that such a department was established in the State Bank by the Playford Government.

Mr. Wells: I reckon it's a Dorothy Dixier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Anyone can apply to the State Bank for a personal loan. The department was set up by Tom Playford. I do not know what the Leader is questioning this Government about. He may well say that Labor Party policy is redundant on this score because it has already been accomplished. That is true: we will clean it up at the next convention. However, I do not believe that that is what the Leader is on about. He has made a statement to the newspapers today, attacking the State and Savings Banks' system, that was clearly designed to attack the administration of those banks and to cause fear, specifically fear, on the part of customers and depositors of those banks.

Dr. Tonkin: Nonsense!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: When the Leader was asked whether—

Mr. Mathwin: You should stick to poetry.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: —he thought people should be advised to withdraw their money from the banking system of the Savings Bank, he said, "It is up to them whether they want their money to be used in these ways".

Mr. Wells: Shame!

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: By innuendo, he wants to start a rush.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Inevitably, it is a direct invitation to people to withdraw their money from the hallowed institutes of this State.

Mr. Gunn: You want to destroy them.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: That is what the Leader is after: it is quite clear from his statements. No other

conclusion can be drawn from what he has said to newspapers, inviting people to take their money out of the Savings Bank of South Australia.

Dr. Tonkin: Nonsense!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: When the Leader was asked about this matter he said, "I will leave it up to them whether their money should be used in these ways." What are the "ways" he was talking about? Without evidence or a firm foundation, and without scruple concerning these institutions, the Leader said that it was intended to use the money deposited in these banks for overseas investments, to set up a Government-owned and run hire-purchase bank, a development bank, a merchant banking system, and investment in Monarto.

Dr. Tonkin: Well?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Each of those accusations is untrue. The Leader had no foundation, basis, or evidence for saying that: he said what he has said because he is trying to attack the banking system and its administration in South Australia for political purposes, to try to create fear—

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: He's been told to do so.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: —amongst the customers of these great institutions of South Australia, institutions that have given unexampled service to the people of this State. What the Leader has done is utterly unscrupulous; treacherous to the State, and a disgrace to him and his position.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Can the Premier say what will be the title, status and responsibilities of the officer to be appointed to the Public Service position announced by the Premier yesterday in connection with State financial institutions, and what institutions and activities will come within his sphere of activity?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will be able to answer that question when a decision has been made by the Government and the position is advertised.

Mr. BECKER: Can the Premier say whether the Government intends that the new appointee over the financial institutions of South Australia and his administration will practise industrial democracy, thereby allowing worker control over the savings of depositors?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member's question is obviously nonsense. The Labor Party has no proposal or policy at all in regard to worker control. We are opposed to worker control of institutions in South Australia, and we make that perfectly clear.

Mr. Dean Brown: I suggest that you reread the policy.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member, like his Leader, can never produce in this House anything in the way of constructive policy. As we can tell from his interjections and the speeches of members opposite, all they are out to do is try to create fear and dissension, as they knock South Australia and its institutions. In relation to worker participation within organisations in South Australia, the Government's policy clearly is that people who are employed by organisations ought to participate in decisions that affect their future. The policy on this basis is well known to workers in institutions in South Australia and to management, and is supported by a great deal of management in this State. The fact is that the honourable member should know that the union (I do not know whether he is still a member of it, but he used to be) is a responsible one in the banking organisation. It does not propose, nor does the Government propose, any worker control of the banks. However, it does propose greater consultation than has previously taken place.

I believe that it is proper. It is supported by management and by the workers, and it will lead to greater industrial harmony and understanding in South Australia, a position that most people in South Australia want to see. I do not know whether the honourable member intends to attack the proposals of his union (or former union, whatever the case may be), but I do not believe, from my long association with the union, that it is in any way irresponsible or would put forward to the Government, in our consultations with it, any irresponsible suggestion in relation to the management of the banks. The provisions in the Statutes which bind trustees of the Savings Bank and members of the State Bank Board and which relate to their responsibilities in their positions will not alter.

Dr. Tonkin: You are not proposing new legislation?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, I am not. I have not announced any new legislation, and the Leader knows it. His suggestion of new legislation in this House is as baseless as all his other fabrications.

#### HEALTH FUNDS

Mr. SLATER: Will the Minister of Community Welfare obtain from the Minister of Health, if possible, information about the amount of monetary reserves held by private health funds in South Australia?

*Members interjecting:*

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Alexandra will resume his seat. The honourable member for Gilles.

Mr. SLATER: The General Manager of a large private health fund in South Australia has, in a press report, denied reports that reserve funds would be used to undercut Medibank. The General Manager went on to say that reserves held by the private health funds represented only 2c a member for medical services and less than six hours a member for hospitalisation. In view of this statement, will the Minister ascertain the total amount of reserves held by the private health funds and, if the reserves are as stated, can he say whether the public would be better advised to obtain cover with Medibank, which seems to be more financially viable than the private health funds?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I, too, saw the report to which the honourable member has referred. On the figures quoted, it seems to me that there are fairly sound reasons for saying that the statement was a direct recommendation from that person to prospective members to consider that they ought to join the Medibank scheme, rather than another, because he suggested that those reserves were not over-large. Because the matter comes more properly within my colleague's portfolio, I will bring it to his attention.

#### JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Mr. OLSON: Has the Minister of Community Welfare any evidence to support claims that South Australia's treatment of juvenile offenders has attracted attention in other States and other countries?

The SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much private conversation going on, and it is far too audible.

Mr. OLSON: The Minister will be only too well aware of the criticisms made from time to time of the treatment of juvenile delinquents, the treatment being sometimes sneeringly referred to as giving them a pat on the head

and a bag of lollies. On the other hand, it has been claimed that South Australia's methods have attracted much interest in other States and in other countries. Can the Minister say whether this is so?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Because the honourable member was kind enough to inform me that he would ask for details on the matter, I have some information to give him. The most recent evidence I can cite is that the Tasmanian Public Works Committee visited South Australia, had discussions with departmental officers, and visited various South Australian training centres in connection with a proposal for constructing a remand centre in Tasmania. A notable case of oversea interest in the methods used in South Australia has come to my attention. I refer to an article on the South Australian system included in a United Nations publication *Juvenile Justice: An International Survey*. This is a report of studies initiated by the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute as a result of the growing awareness of the world-wide problem of the increasing involvement of youth in crime. I remind members opposite that it is an international opinion that there is a world-wide increase. I hope that, in future, when considering whether they should ask the type of question they sometimes ask, members opposite will note that some of the phenomena referred to are not necessarily based only in South Australia. South Australia is the only Australian State represented in the publication to which I have referred. The publication referred to includes studies of juvenile justice systems in nine other countries, both western and Asian. The countries are: India, Japan, Scotland (I do not know what the member for Glenelg would think of that), Afghanistan, France, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico and the State of South Australia.

#### INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY UNIT

Mr. MATHWIN: Can the Premier say whether it is correct that the Unit for Industrial Democracy is currently having discussions with the State Government Insurance Commission, the Savings Bank of South Australia, or the State Bank concerning the adoption of the Government's industrial democracy policy in these institutions?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: As I am not aware of discussions with the State Government Insurance Commission, I will inquire about that matter. There have been some discussions with the senior officers of the State Bank and the Savings Bank to outline the basis for a general programme, at the request of the Savings Bank's officers. The union has discussed the matter with the unit, but at this stage the matter has not been taken past that. There has simply been an initial discussion as to the nature of a participatory programme by bank officers. It has certainly been sought by the union itself, and we have naturally included it in the discussions as to proceedings.

#### BABY-SITTERS

Mrs. BYRNE: Can the Minister of Community Welfare say whether the Community Welfare Department has any plans to ensure that, when baby-sitting agencies are licensed, only suitable persons will be sent to people requiring such services? The Minister recently announced the Government's intention to introduce legislation to provide for the licensing of baby-sitting agencies that provide a service for monetary or other consideration. I understand that this decision was made at the request of existing agencies in

Adelaide, after discussions that followed an unfortunate incident in Sydney involving a baby-sitter sent by an agency. However, I am not sure that licensing of itself will solve all problems in this area, including the problem of an adequate supply of suitable, competent persons. Has the department any plans to improve the quality of baby-sitting, as it were, in order to safeguard the interests of people who wish to employ someone to mind their children?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I believe the honourable member asked me whether we had plans to ensure that, when licensing commences, only suitable people would be supplied to persons wanting the services of baby-sitters. I think that that would be a difficult contract and an unwise one for me to undertake, in representing the department in this place, for the people of South Australia. I hope, within the department, to prepare plans which will ensure that the persons who are available may well be of a better quality than would otherwise be the case. I am sure that the honourable member would agree with me that, in the final analysis, the responsibility for engaging a particular person or persons in this activity would certainly reside with the parents, and correctly so.

I have asked that, if and when this Parliament sees fit to pass licensing legislation, the department consider the possibility of baby-sitters being trained with some courses being made available to persons who wished to be licensed in their own right or through an agency. The case that comes to mind (and I am sure that the member for Hanson, who has displayed some interest in these matters, would agree with me) is that some training could well be to the advantage of baby-sitters, and parents with handicapped children. I am sure that this would be an activity in which the department might well be engaged. I stress that what I am putting forward to the House is only in the embryonic stage, but I am trying to ensure that this will happen.

#### ROAD SIGNS

Mr. ABBOTT: Is the Minister of Transport aware of the report in the *Australian* of August 11 in which Mr. Iles, State Director of the Good Neighbour Council, has asked for the adoption of standard international code signs on roads, public vehicles and railway stations? Can the Minister say what consideration has been given to this matter? The report states that the Minister has been asked to take up the cudgels on behalf of the nation's migrants, many of whom cannot understand our road signs.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am aware of the statement in yesterday's press. It is perhaps strange that this report, calling on something to be done in this matter, should have appeared yesterday when at the same time the first issue was coming off the press of about 25 000 pamphlets depicting the international signs which have been adopted by the National Association of Australian State Road Authorities and which are being adopted by the South Australian Highways Department. The pamphlets will be made available to the public in the next few weeks at the Highways Department's stand at the Royal Show, the offices of the Royal Automobile Association and the Information Centre at the State Administration Centre. I will take the opportunity of ensuring that honourable members, too, get a copy so that perhaps they may care to display it in their electoral offices, as

an indication of how alert the Government is to the needs of the motorist.

#### SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION

Mr. CHAPMAN: I address my question to the Minister of Labour and Industry. Would the Minister explain the multi-sex accommodation requirements on sheep properties where employees are covered by the Federal Pastoral Industry Award? I refer to those required to reside on the property whilst employed either permanently on station work or temporarily in seasonal shearing operations. During the first session of this Parliament, the Sex Discrimination Act was passed enabling any person of either sex to seek and, in fact, enjoy employment in any industry within the State, placing the responsibility on the employer to accept, all other things being equal, people of either sex in such employment.

A fairly serious situation has been brought to my attention because on shearing properties there has been for many years accommodation designed and suited to house male employees only. The Minister would understand that matter without further explanation. However, as a result of this multi-sex employment arrangement that we now have, station owners are required, upon a person's employment, forthwith to have suitable accommodation for him. I have heard that some of the male shearer employees have said they are prepared to share their accommodation with the female employees, but we all know the undesirable effects of that sort of practice. So, in order to clarify the position and determine who shall be responsible for that accommodation, I ask the Minister for his explanation, particularly in this instance because, whilst the property owner in ordinary circumstances is responsible for the accommodation, in the case where shearing contractors are involved the contractor is the employer and there appears to be a grey area here in relation to where the respective responsibilities lie. In order to clarify this situation for the owner, the contractor, and employees of both sexes, I ask the Minister to give an explanation.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: One thing that the honourable member has achieved is that, if I lose my seat in Parliament, I will certainly go back to shearing.

Mr. Chapman: You told us last year that you wouldn't go back for \$100 a hundred, but you'd go back now.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: This did not apply last year but it does now. More seriously, I point out that the honourable member was good enough to supply me yesterday with a copy of his question.

*Members interjecting:*

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Chapman: We had a discussion about this matter.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I assure honourable members that this question is not a Dorothy Dixier, and that both the member for Alexandra and I have an extreme interest in this matter.

The regulations under the Shearers Accommodation Act which have been approved to come into operation on September 1, 1976, cannot be regarded as discriminatory. That is my first point. In so far as sleeping accommodation is concerned, the standard required under the proposed regulations would be quite satisfactory for females as well as males. The only problem that I foresee possibly arising is where the sleeping accommodation cubicles, which, as the honourable member will know, are designed to take two persons, are all taken up by males. Another problem could be if there was one female to be accommodated.

That would then mean that only one person would be using a bedroom capable of taking two persons, which might affect the total numbers able to be accommodated in that accommodation.

In relation to the sanitary and bathing facilities, the honourable member will know that at present if a female cook is employed there is no exclusive right to the use of that accommodation by females other than the exclusion of males. It can be said that scope already exists for sleeping, bathing and sanitary accommodation to be separately used by males and females. Sufficient facilities are provided to cope with the total number using those facilities, and it is expected that the property owner (and I think this is the point that the honourable member is most concerned about) could see that an appropriate system was evolved to take care of the eventualities proposed by the honourable member. It is the responsibility of the property owner to make sure that adequate and suitable accommodation is provided. It is also his responsibility to see that proper arrangements are made for the use of that accommodation.

#### SCHOOLS COMMISSION REPORT

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Can the Minister of Education give information on the report of the Schools Commission that was released to the public yesterday, saying particularly what impact the contents of this report may have on South Australia?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: Without wanting to detain the House, I will make three points about the report, which, of course is a public document available for perusal by honourable members, and I recommend it to them. First, although it is not certain that the report in its present form will be accepted by the Commonwealth Government, we can bet London to a brick that it will be, because the Schools Commission has not been allowed to operate this year in the way first conceived for it when it was set up.

Dr. Eastick: Whose decision was that? Mr. Beazley's?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: It was the decision of the current Government that the Schools Commission would have \$508 000 000, in terms of December, 1975, prices, to distribute between the States and between the Government sector and the non-government sector, and it was for the Schools Commission to allocate between these sectors up to that point. The concept of having a Schools Commission that considers needs and then makes its public statement to the Government, with the Government then responding, has been set aside in this exercise. Also, we are talking not about a triennium in the traditional sense but about a rolling triennium whereby expenditure can be reviewed in the traditional sort of way on an annual basis. A person once said to me, "One of these days we will get a triennium with three years in it." We have not yet had one. The second point I make is that the Schools Commission has not really had an opportunity to meet the guidelines set down. The guidelines were that there should be a 2 per cent increase, in real terms, in financing schools through the Schools Commission. I draw the attention of honourable members to what is stated on, I think, pages 4 and 5 of the Schools Commission report.

Mr. Nankivell: Which one?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The current one, the one released yesterday.

Mr. Nankivell: It's not available.

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: I can certainly make a copy available to the honourable member. Amongst these

additional guidelines was one that some additional effort should be required in certain areas. I have no quarrel about the commission's considering those areas. Another guideline concerned the additional cost on the non-government schools as a result of the increasing use of lay teachers rather than teachers who were members of a religious order. A further guideline concerned additional assistance in boarding accommodation for students from isolated areas. In addition, other points are made. Within the 2 per cent increase in expenditure in real terms, it was necessary for the commission to make some improvements in that area, yet the whole thing is predicated against the 1.1 per cent increase in enrolments in all sectors. It simply has not been possible, so far as I can see from my reading of the report, for the Schools Commission to discharge its obligation in these areas within the 2 per cent increase and still keep everything else at a maintenance of effort in real terms. I commend the report to honourable members so that they can judge for themselves.

The third point we have to consider is the effect of the cut-back in real terms in Loan Council allocations to the States. What we get in December, 1975, prices for capital grants on the Schools Commission is \$12 080 000, and yet the total capital programme of the Education Department in South Australia this year, as announced in a document which is before members, introduced in this place by the Treasurer the other day, is \$40 500 000. Whatever the Schools Commission can do, that cannot make much impact on a drastic reduction in real terms in the availability of Loan funds. The Loan Council expanded by about 5 per cent the capacity of the States to borrow. That is against a 15 per cent increase in prices. Honourable members will know the extent to which this Government used recurrent moneys in the last financial year in order to assist the Loan Fund. They know something of what we will have to do in this year again from general revenue to assist the Loan Fund. The Education Department in South Australia has, in its dealings with the Schools Commission, used the new flexibility that is available to it to shunt money as between recurrent and capital, similarly to give extra assistance to the capital area. Such measures have been forced upon us because of the cut-back in real terms in capital, not from the Schools Commission but through the Loan Council. Further, they take from the recurrent area money which could otherwise be put into that area. Australia does not yet commit to education the percentage of the gross national product that is committed by countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America. That is the reasonable sort of target we have, and I believe the whole of the education community should be striving to see that this target is reached.

#### MILLICENT HOSPITAL

Mr. VANDEPEER: Will the Minister of Community Welfare ascertain from the Minister of Health the Government's intentions concerning the provision of finance for the construction of a new wing for the Millicent and District Hospital Incorporated? The present hospital is over-crowded, and in fact was working above capacity when the extensions were first mooted four years ago. This Government has made promises to provide finance for the extensions, but up to the present no money has been made available. The services provided by the hospital are now degenerating because of the over-crowding and the consequent lack of morale amongst the staff. It is necessary for the maternity wing to be used for general

patients, and, to make provision for the spate of accidents often occurring at the weekend, spare beds are made up in the corridors on Friday or Saturday. This type of operation has had a drastic effect on staff morale. Millicent is a semi-industrial town and should be able to provide immediate hospital care for the victims of accidents which, I am sorry to say, can occur at any time. The accident rate in industry at Millicent is good, but the possibility of accidents always exists. Where people work a four-shift system, as in Millicent, machines are in operation for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In these circumstances, the hospital must be able to cater for emergencies. As the situation is critical, I seek a positive statement of the Government's intention on providing finance for this hospital.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I thank the honourable member for his long and detailed explanation. I am sure it will assist my colleague to bring down a reply.

### WATER SCREENING

Mr. ARNOLD: Can the Minister of Works say whether the Government now accepts the inevitability of screening all water pumped from the Murray River for irrigation and domestic purposes? In the past, the Government has steadfastly refused to accept the necessity for the screening of all water to be pumped from the river into the new irrigation distribution systems being installed by the Government in the irrigation areas. The Minister will be aware that, because the water is not screened, large quantities of fish and crustaceans can be pumped into the closed system, causing enormous problems with sprinklers and with the meters being installed with the new irrigation system. Apart from the irrigation problem, the supply is also used for domestic purposes, and once the fish and crustaceans are pumped into the system they decompose. This situation is most unsatisfactory, and I believe it represents a health hazard to the people using the water for domestic purposes. Has the Government accepted the absolute need to screen all water going into this system?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will discuss the matter with my colleague the Minister of Irrigation. I believe it would be his responsibility rather than mine, as Minister of Works, to decide whether or not the measures mentioned by the honourable member should be taken. I recognise the points he has made.

Mr. Arnold: The design side of it is carried out by the Engineering and Water Supply Department.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: But only under instructions from and paid for by the Minister of Irrigation. Therefore, the decisions are made by him, and not by me. Certainly, I will take up the matter with him to see what can be done, and I will let the honourable member know whether any change in policy is likely.

### REHABILITATION COMMITTEE

Mr. WELLS: Can the Minister of Labour and Industry say when the working party he set up to report on the rehabilitation and employment of disabled people will operate, when it is likely to meet, and whether it is possible for the public to participate?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The committee met on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week at Bedford Industries. It has sorted out all the administrative and organisational problems associated with such a committee, and it will

meet again on August 28. It is under way and functioning well. Since last week's announcement, my office has been inundated with calls from organisations, individuals, and people wanting to help. I have never seen so much support for a project. A tremendous interest in the problem is apparent. My officers have been telling people who do not belong to organisations with people able to represent them to contact their local member of Parliament. I am hoping that every member, Labor or Liberal—

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Or Country Party.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: —or Country Party or new Liberal Movement, for that matter, although that member has not been in the House all the week—

Mr. Becker: He's in another State, earning a dollar.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I did not know where he was but I had noticed that he was not here. One notices his absence, because he keeps some fire in the place. However, I urge every member who receives inquiries about this matter to direct them to the committee. If people are isolated and have no-one to help or to prepare a case for them, I shall be pleased if any member knowing of such a case will contact my office to get the necessary information, or, in turn, help people to develop and present a case to the committee. As this matter is of vital interest to the people of South Australia, I should appreciate members' help.

### GRAIN

Mr. BLACKER: Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Agriculture, say whether the Government has taken any steps to hold the present stocks of grain in the grain handling system and, if it has not done so, whether it will negotiate for the freezing, where possible, of the remaining grain reserves for drought requirements? The grain stocks in South Australia have been reduced to about 385 000 tonnes of wheat, 155 000 tonnes of barley, and 4 400 tonnes of oats, which is about 40 per cent less than the stocks held at this time last year. I am concerned that the present drought conditions will create a heavy requirement for grain, not only for feed but also for next season's grain crop, for at least the next nine months. It is important that action be taken while some stocks are still available. I shall be grateful if the Minister will tell the House what is the Government's intention in this matter.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall have my colleague examine the matter, as the honourable member has suggested, and let him know the outcome of that examination as soon as possible.

### BREAD

Dr. EASTICK: Will the Minister of Prices and Consumer Affairs tell the House what action he has taken to ensure that the South Australian public receives properly weighted unwrapped bread? Although we realise that the Minister has recently become the custodian of the matchboxes, I suggest to him that, if the report in the August, 1976, issue of *Choice* magazine is correct, a far greater problem exists in relation to another commodity consumed by the public. The report to which I have referred states that unwrapped bread sold in South Australia is consistently under weight, albeit that the sample taken came from one bakery. However, it is responsible for the distribution of bread throughout the State. It is important, especially

with increasing prices, that the public, when purchasing this basic commodity virtually daily, except on Sundays, gets value for money. I refer the Minister to this report, which states that, although the basic size of a pack of bread should be 900 grams, the average weight of bread in the purchases made in South Australia is 872 grams. I believe the Minister will realise that, for the weight to be down to an average of only 872 grams, there must be a gross variation in the weight of the product being sold on the market.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I am aware of the report to which the honourable member has referred. This matter has been taken up by the Warden of Trade Measurements. The Government has been concerned for some time about the weight of bread sold in South Australia. Some months ago, I received a report that loaves of bread that were being sold as 900-gram loaves were, in fact, only 750-gram loaves. That report arose from complaints made by the Goolwa Australian Labor Party sub-branch, which was concerned about this matter. I had that matter investigated, as a result of which corrective action has been taken by the vendor concerned. Having had that report drawn to my attention by my departmental officers, I instructed them to conduct tests urgently in this matter, and I understand that sample loaves have been purchased and that the matter is being considered. Tests are being conducted in relation to the weight of the sample loaves of bread that have been purchased, and I should have the results of those tests in about a week.

I think it is unfortunate that the honourable member has seen fit to raise, with some jest, the matter of matches. Although this matter involves only a minor impact on consumers, if the honourable member considers that the largest match-making company in Australia makes about 160 000 000 matches a day, and saves, say, only one match a box, he will see that it involves a large rip-off. The Government is concerned about this matter and wants to ensure that this does not happen in South Australia. In this respect, I have received a letter from the New South Wales Minister of Consumer Affairs in which he congratulated the South Australian Government on its stand on the matter and assured us of his strong support for that stand, stating also that a similar standard would be applied in New South Wales. It is obvious, therefore, that South Australian and New South Wales consumers will, as a result of action taken by their respective Labor Governments, be protected from the actions of match companies in seeking to deny them justice as consumers.

#### EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

Mr. ALLISON: Will the Minister of Community Welfare say whether the premises owned by the Community Welfare Department, in Elizabeth Street, Mount Gambier, will continue to be available for emergency accommodation, or whether, as the Minister had previously intimated to a local deputation, the building may be demolished later this year to make way for departmental premises?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I do not have with me accurate information that I can give the honourable member at present. I recall the meetings to which the honourable member referred, when, it seemed to me, about half the population of Mount Gambier seemed to be confronting me (I think that is the correct term) on the footpath outside the premises to which he has referred. I think the honourable member will agree that as time

went on both the "con" and the "front" disappeared, and we had a friendly discussion about the activities carried on in the house, which was part of the city's community welfare facilities. I was able, I think fairly, to remind those present (and that is all I did) that they had a direct interest in the matter. They responded in a good way and decided to accept the challenge that the situation regarding the house presented. I do not know off the cuff what is the exact state of plans regarding the house to which the honourable member has referred, but I will certainly obtain a report for the honourable member and let him have it.

#### SWANPORT FARMERS

Mr. WARDLE: Will the Minister of Transport personally interest himself tomorrow in the plight of two dairy farmers whose properties are situated on the swamp in the area in which the new bridge is being constructed at Swanport? This matter has figured on this week's front page of the *Murray Valley Standard*, as well as in yesterday's *News*. The report in the former stated that the dairymen faced bankruptcy. I should be pleased to give the Minister information additional to that which he might already have on the subject. I therefore ask the Minister to interest himself personally in this matter tomorrow, as I am sure the situation is desperate.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: My attention has already been drawn to this matter. Indeed, the honourable member was kind enough to give me a photocopy of the press reports a little while ago. It is, of course, a matter of concern that the people concerned are experiencing difficulty. However, I notice from the report that one of the farmers has been advised by the Agriculture Department to lodge a claim immediately.

Mr. Wardle: That was some months ago.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That is certainly the course that must be followed. If a case can be established, and compensation is payable, the person concerned should obviously get it. I will pursue the matter with the Commissioner of Highways to see whether any further advice can be brought forward that might help the honourable member.

#### GLADSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. VENNING: Will the Minister of Education again draw his attention to fire safety, or the lack of it, at Gladstone High School? On November 11 last year I asked the Minister whether he would draw his attention to the situation at Gladstone High School because the District Officer of the Emergency Fire Services at Gladstone had written to me saying that he had been invited by the school committee to examine fire safety at that school. He reported that a grave situation could develop. Although it causes me much pain to tell the Minister that nothing was done last year following my question, I ask the Minister to draw his attention to the situation again. Not much needs to be done at the school to rectify the position. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has laid mains to the school, so it is only a matter for the Education Department in conjunction with the Public Buildings Department to extend the mains so that they can be used, if necessary, at the new school.

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The honourable member has fairly effectively drawn my attention to the matter, and I assume that he wishes me to draw my department's attention to the situation that exists at the school. I will take up the matter to see what information I can get for the honourable member. It would be fairer to say that my department, in conjunction with the Public Buildings Department, has taken a good deal of interest in fire safety. No-one would pretend that an ideal situation exists in relation to the evacuation of children from school buildings. South Australia has a variety of schoolbuilding structures, which have been built over many years and, in some cases, need fairly extensive modification before the sorts of evacuation procedure that I would regard as ideal could be undertaken. I recall, for example, an evacuation procedure that was tried on a trial basis with Public Buildings Department officers present. As part of the test, a teacher had to break a pane of glass in order to evacuate the children from the classroom. The teacher was slightly built and could not break the glass. A spectator who was viewing the trial had to wield a chair and break the glass for her. There are many problems in relation to this matter. I would not wish to suggest that the situation is other than that. However, I will take up the matter raised by the honourable member. I assure the House that the department is looking carefully at the modification of existing buildings to determine what proper evacuation procedures should take place.

#### ROAD HAZARDS

Mr. WOTTON: Will the Minister of Transport take steps to warn the general public of the need to take appropriate precautions when driving in the Hills in hazardous conditions, especially when it is foggy? Much publicity has been given recently in local papers in the Adelaide Hills about concern expressed by people in relation to this matter. Several serious accidents have occurred recently on major roads in the Hills, and it is believed necessary that the Minister should warn people of the hazards of driving in such conditions. I know the Minister does not like the term "turning on the lights", but I suggest that a warning could be given by the Minister that would help to relieve this situation. In a recent report in a Hills paper, a police officer from the area referred to this matter and asked that something be done by the Minister.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I appreciate the question asked by the honourable member, and I appreciate the difficult circumstances and dire results that often occur when people are in a fog and turn on their lights. The same occurred in Australia when there was a bit of a fog—

Mr. Wotton: Answer the question.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: —last December and the lights were turned on. As a result of that we are now in the greatest mess of all time. I hope the same sort of situation will not occur in the Adelaide Hills. I would expect that any responsible person driving a motor vehicle in a fog would so regulate his behaviour that he would not constitute a danger to himself or anyone else.

Mr. Wotton: But they are not doing that.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If they are not (and I appreciate what the honourable member is saying), and they do not have sufficient sense to take the necessary precautions, I doubt very much whether words from me, the Commissioner of Police, the Road Traffic Board, or even the honourable member would penetrate too far.

I will discuss the matter with the Road Traffic Board to see whether the board can come up with a reasonable solution to what I accept as a real problem.

*At 3.7 p.m., the bells having been rung:*

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

#### COUNTRY FIRES BILL

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the prevention and suppression of bush fires and other fires; to repeal the Bush Fires Act, 1960-1972; and for all other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### EXPLANATION OF BILL

It implements the recommendations made by a working party appointed in 1971 by a former Minister of Agriculture (Hon. T. M. Casey, M.L.C.) to inquire into and report upon all aspects of a proposed reorganisation of country fire services in the State. These recommendations are to be found in Parliamentary Paper 106/72.

The Bill preserves many principles of the existing Act that have been proved valid by long experience. However, it also introduces a good deal that is new. The provisions for administration are more comprehensive and complete than in the old Act and there has been a good deal of rationalisation and simplification of substantive provisions previously contained in the old Act. The principle of a separate Act for bush fire, control, and country volunteer fire services, is in keeping with the policy in every other State, each of which has its respective "Country", "Rural" or "Bush" fires Act. The title "Country Fires Act" was adopted as the most appropriate name because, although much of the Bill is applicable throughout the State, its major provisions relate to the establishment and maintenance of country fire services and the fighting of fires outside fire brigade districts.

The change in title from "S.A. Emergency Fire Services" to "S.A. Country Fire Services" is designed to avoid confusion with other "emergency" bodies and to obviate inappropriate calls upon C.F.S. services. The Bill provides for a board of 10 members, a Director of Country Fire Services, and such other officers as may be necessary to enable the functions presently performed by E.F.S. headquarters and the various bush fire committees of the S.A. Police Department and the Agriculture and Fisheries Department to be consolidated under the management of the one statutory body.

Statutory fire control regions and regional and district committees are proposed by the Bill. A statutory fund is to be administered by the board. This fund will be applied both in defraying general administrative expenses and in subsidising the purchase of equipment by C.F.S. organisations. Contributions to the fund are to be made by Government, insurers, councils and C.F.S. organisations. An innovation of special interest is a provision for



the formation of a joint "Fire-fighting Advisory Committee" to advise the Minister, the Fire Brigades Board and the Country Fire Services Board on any matter affecting the co-ordination or rationalisation of fire-fighting services in the State.

The Bill is significantly shorter than the present Act. The condensation of the old legislative provisions has not resulted in the omission of any major principle from the Act. However, many antiquated provisions have been dispensed with and a good deal of administrative and minor detail has been left to the regulations. Much time and effort has gone into the drafting of this important measure, which is designed to co-ordinate and rationalise the operations of country fire services and to simplify the law relating to wild fire suppression and control for the benefit of the general public. I commend the Bill to the earnest attention of members.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 enables the operation of specified clauses to be suspended if necessary when the Act is brought into operation. Clause 3 sets out the arrangement of the Bill. Clause 4 repeals the Bush Fires Act, 1960, and its amendments, dissolves the Bush Fires Equipment Subsidies Fund, and transfers the moneys to the Country Fire Services Fund. Clause 5 sets out the definitions necessary for the purposes of the Bill. The definition of "burning off" seeks to overcome the problem that the distinction between "burning off" and "lighting a fire in the open air" is often unclear. A new definition of "fire danger season" is included. This term comprises the periods that were previously known as the prohibited and conditional burning periods.

Clause 6 directs attention to the State-wide application of certain provisions of the Bill. This provision is designed to avert confusion as to the territorial application of the Bill. Clauses 7 to 16 establish the Country Fire Services Board, and deal with various matters pertaining to its membership and proceedings. Clauses 17 and 18 provide for the board to appoint a Director and other officers, and to determine the terms and conditions of the appointments. The board is constituted a public authority for the purposes of the meaning of the Superannuation Act. Clause 19 provides for the proclamation of fire control regions, and the establishment of regional fire-fighting associations.

Clause 20 empowers the board to register district fire-fighting associations. Clauses 21 and 22 provide for the board to register C.F.S. fire brigades and to register "group committees" for brigades, which desire some formal interconnection for the purpose of training activities or major fire-fighting operations. Clause 23 enables the board to cancel the registration of a C.F.S. organisation at its request, or when the organisation has become defunct or is not properly carrying out its functions. Clauses 24 and 25 relate to the appointment, by the board or council, of fire control officers and fire party leaders. Provision is also made under which certain officers (e.g., foresters) become fire control officers *ex officio*.

Clause 26 provides for compensation for injury or death of a fire control officer, fire party leader, or member of a C.F.S. fire brigade. The Workmen's Compensation Act applies as if his employer were the board. Clause 27 establishes a joint committee, appointed by the Governor, comprising a Chairman and four members; two members being nominated by the Fire Brigades Board and two by the Country Fire Services Board. The committee is to advise the Minister and the boards on any matter affecting the co-ordination or rationalisation of fire-fighting services in the State and on certain other matters. Clauses 28 to 31 enable the board to establish and maintain the Country Fire

Services Fund which comprises any moneys appropriated by Parliament or recovered by the board, for the administration of the Act. The board may, with the approval of the Treasurer, invest or borrow moneys. The clauses also provide for contribution by insurers to the expenses of administering the Act. Clauses 32 to 35 maintain the obligation of a council to provide adequate equipment in its areas for fire-fighting and enable the council to expand its revenue for that purpose. Where, in the opinion of the board, a council has failed to provide adequate equipment, the board may require the council to acquire specified equipment to overcome the deficiency. An appeal lies to the Minister against such a requirement. The board may, with the approval of the Treasurer, make a grant out of the fund to any council or C.F.S. organisation for providing buildings, equipment or materials and for defraying working expenses incurred in fire-fighting. Equipment, purchased with the help of grants, may not be sold or disposed of without the consent of the board.

Clause 36 exempts the board from the payment of rates under the Local Government Act, the Waterworks Act, or the Sewerage Act, and land tax under the Land Tax Act. Clause 37 introduces the concept of a fire danger season which is to be the period from November 1 to April 30 or the period as altered under the terms of the Bill. The fire danger season replaces both the prohibited burning period and the conditional burning period under the Bush Fires Act. The board is empowered to alter the fire danger season in the whole or any part of the State, but it must consult with a council before making any alteration that may affect the area of a council. A council may, on the ground of seasonal conditions, request the board to alter the fire danger season, and the board must accede to such a request unless there is good and sufficient reason for not doing so.

Clause 38, another new concept, deals with all types of fires in the open air, whereas the Bush Fires Act has fragmented provisions dealing with various kinds of fires. Basic conditions for the lighting and maintaining of various kinds of fire are laid down in the clause, and provision is made for detailed rules to be prescribed in the regulations. This clause further provides for the 16th day of February to be the prescribed day. This was, in effect, the commencing day of the conditional burning period under the Bush Fires Act. During this period the burning off of bush and stubble may be generally undertaken for the purpose of farm management. The board may alter the prescribed day for the whole or a part of the State and is required to consult with the council of any area which may be affected by such an alteration. A person may burn off bush or standing grass within 14 days after the commencement of the fire danger season or within 14 days of the prescribed day, provided that he is authorised by an order of the board or by a resolution of a council. This provision thus preserves the power of councils, under a different form, to effect what is presently called the seasonal alteration of periods under the Bush Fires Act.

Clause 39 restricts burning off land on public holidays. Clause 40 empowers the board to prohibit the lighting of fires in the open air in any part of the State after consulting with the council of any area affected by the prohibition. The regulations may exempt certain fires from the terms of any such prohibition. Clause 41 retains the prohibition of the lighting and maintaining of fires in the open air on days of extreme fire danger. Clause 42 provides for regulations to be made for the prohibition or safe use of prescribed fires. Clause 43 enables regulations to be made to deal with the wide variety of machines and

appliances which produce heat or sparks and thus constitute a fire danger. Clause 44 provides for the board and councils to issue permits for the lighting of fires in certain circumstances. Clause 45 provides for the carrying in caravans of an efficient chemical fire extinguisher during the fire danger season. Clauses 46 and 47 prohibit smoking near flammable bush or grass and the throwing of burning material (for example, lighted cigarette butts) from vehicles during the fire danger season. Clause 48 empowers the board or a council to require the owner of premises situated outside a fire brigade district to take such action as is considered necessary to prevent the outbreak or spread of fire from those premises. An appeal lies to the Minister against such a requirement.

Clause 49 provides for the clearing of flammable debris from roads during or on completion of roadworks, and in the event of default, empowers councils to dispose of the flammable material and recover the costs involved. Clause 50 empowers the board or a council to give written directions for the clearing of bush or grass from any land to prevent the outbreak or spread of fire, and provides a right of appeal to the Minister against any such direction. The authority of the board in this regard extends over a council in respect of land under that council's care, control or management. Clauses 51 to 57 describe the powers of fire control officers, fire party leaders, and police officers in the control and suppression of fires and provide penalties for hindering officers in the performance of their powers and functions. Clause 58 provides a reciprocal arrangement for co-ordination of fire-fighting operations at or near adjoining State boundaries by empowering a member of a recognised interstate fire-fighting organisation to take control of operations in the absence of a fire control officer. Clauses 59 to 61 relate to the installation and use of fire alarms and appliances and prescribe penalties for their misuse. Clauses 62 to 66 contain a miscellany of legal provisions. Clause 67 contains regulation-making powers, and clause 68 preserves powers conferred by the Fire Brigades Act, 1936-1976.

Mr. GUNN secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### INDUSTRIAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT (Minister of Labour and Industry) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 1972. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### EXPLANATION OF BILL

The Bill, which amends the principal Act, the Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 1972, is introduced following a departmental examination of the workings of that measure since it came into operation. The amendments are somewhat disparate; they can perhaps be dealt with by an examination of the clauses of the measure. Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends section 7 of the principal Act by: (a) correcting a typographical error in the definition of "building work"; (b) somewhat clarifying the meaning of the term "employer" in the context of this measure; (c) extending the same clarification to the definition of "work injury"; and (d) re-casting the definition of

"worker" to ensure that "independent contractors" are, to an appropriate extent, included within the meaning of the expression "worker".

Clause 4 amends section 8 of the principal Act by enlarging the membership of the board from seven members to 10 members, the new members being the Chief Inspector of Industrial Safety, who is to be a member *ex officio*, a nominee of the Metal Industries Association, South Australia, and a further nominee of the United Trades and Labor Council. Clause 5 is consequential on the increase in membership. Clause 6 re-enacts section 12 of the principal Act and provides that in the absence of the Chairman or his deputy the Chief Inspector can preside at the meeting of the board. Clauses 7 and 8 increase from \$200 to \$500 the penalties under sections 16 and 19 of the principal Act. Clause 9 amends section 20 of the principal Act by increasing the penalty in this section from \$500 to \$1 000.

Clauses 10 and 11 make an appropriate increase in penalties under sections 21 and 23 respectively. Clause 12 amends section 24 of the principal Act by providing for the expiry of the registration upon an occupier ceasing to occupy registered premises. Clause 13 repeals section 25 of the principal Act which is now redundant in the light of the amendment effected by clause 12. Clause 14 appropriately increases the penalties under section 26 of the principal Act. Clause 15 amends section 27 of the principal Act which deals with reporting of work injuries by providing that this section may be applied to work injuries occurring in declared industries, as to which see new subsection (1a). Clause 16 amends section 28 of the principal Act, which deals with reporting of certain accidents where equipment critical to safety is involved, by somewhat extending the scope of this section both as to industries to which it can apply as well as to equipment.

Clause 17 amends section 29 of the principal Act which deals with duties of employers and is in aid of safety education. Clause 18 increases the penalty under section 30 of the principal Act. Clause 19 provides somewhat more flexibility in granting exemptions from the requirement for the appointment of workers' safety representatives in circumstances where the aim of the section is clearly achieved in a different manner. Clause 20 amends section 32 of the principal Act which relates to the sale of machinery. The most significant amendment made by this clause is the removal of subsection (2), which was of the nature of a transitional provision. Clause 21 amends section 35 of the principal Act and, in effect, extends by six months the time within which proceedings may be brought under the Act. Clause 22 increases the penalties under section 36 of the principal Act. Clause 23 makes certain amendments to the schedule to the principal Act which are self explanatory.

Mr. DEAN BROWN secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 10, Page 521.)

Dr. TONKIN (Leader of the Opposition): Once again we are to examine the Treasurer's statement on the Loan Estimates, and, on superficial examination, there seems to be very little to distinguish it from, say, last year's document. It is in the same format, and includes some sentences and paragraphs that occur from year to year.

Certainly, the figures are different, but who can really blame members of the public if they cannot understand exactly what it is saying, or cannot be bothered to understand what it is all about? This is a great pity because, while it may look the same, there is no doubt at all that there has been a marked change in emphasis between the last statement and the one for the preceding year. This fact seems to have slipped past the media: of course, members of the public depend on the media for information on subjects that are as difficult as this one. The document for 1975-76 and the document for this year contain deliberately misleading statements and inferences from the Treasurer. In that way, they are equally dishonest, but it is the total and complete about-face in the Treasurer's attitude, revealed by a comparison between the two documents, which is significant. For that reason, if for no other, this is a significant document. It demonstrates a degree of cynicism and political opportunism on the part of the Government unparalleled in the history of South Australia.

The Loan Estimates last year were introduced, as usual, just before the Federal Budget. It was obvious at the time that the Whitlam Government was a disaster. As everyone knows, it was well on the way to establishing a record deficit of more than \$3 600 000 000, which could well have become \$4 500 000 000 in a full financial year. Compounding the effect of this overspending was the increasing reliance of this State, especially, on special purpose grants.

Obviously, at that time it had become quite clear that the Whitlam Government was in severe financial difficulties, and that it could not, and did not, intend to live up to the expectations that the South Australian Government had of it at the time. Did we hear a concerted attack on the Whitlam Government from the Treasurer and other members opposite for its profligate overspending and its unsympathetic attitude towards the States' problems? Of course we did not. All we heard were pious hopes. Instead, we were presented with a wishy-washy document that showed clearly only two things. The first was the extent of South Australia's financial reliance on the Australian Government, and the term was used at least 29 times in last year's document. The second was that the Treasurer had no clear idea of the State's prospects at federal hands. His statement abounded with remarks like "is expected" and "not yet known", and it can be largely summed up in his own words, "We have not yet received firm advice of many major expected grants and loans." I emphasise that that statement was made by the Treasurer last year in respect of the Whitlam Government.

As long as his own Party was in power, the Treasurer was not willing to criticise the Federal Government in spite of its abysmally poor performance financially and the grave uncertainties that were reflected throughout his speech.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You know that that is untrue.

Dr. TONKIN: The Treasurer, in one of the most significant documents to come before this House, was not willing to criticise his Federal colleagues in any way.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Why don't you stick to the facts?

Dr. TONKIN: I know that Ministers opposite do not care for the truth to come out. Contrast this attitude towards his colleagues in the Whitlam Government with the attitude shown in the present document towards the present Federal Government. This statement represents a totally cynical and hypocritical change in attitude which has come about simply because of political expediency,

following the change of Government in Canberra, and it bears no relation whatever to fact, and shows no concern for the basic needs of South Australia.

What justification is there for the Treasurer's present attitude? He certainly cannot claim honestly that he has been misled as to the present financial position of this country. The effect of inflation and of the Whitlam Government's over-spending must be clearer to him than to most people, and, in any case, the cuts in spending that have been made necessary have been detailed and emphasised repeatedly by the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer. The facts must be clear to him, as they are to all other State Treasurers, and they are certainly unpalatable.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: The other State Treasurers agree with me, not you.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You are the only State representative who invariably supports the Prime Minister, no matter what, and you'll be sorry.

Dr. TONKIN: The Minister obviously does not read the newspapers, does not watch television, and is not often in this House: if he was in touch, he would know perfectly well that I do not support the Prime Minister publicly on every possible occasion. Actually, several times I have disagreed with the Federal Government's actions. What is more, I have taken action at those times to contact the Federal Government and make that position clear. I would not do what members opposite did (blindly following the Whitlam Administration), because the welfare of the people of South Australia must at all times come first; that is something that one cannot say about members opposite.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You are always knocking the welfare of the people of South Australia.

Dr. TONKIN: The financial facts must surely be clear to the Treasurer, as they are to all other State Treasurers, and certainly they are unpalatable. No State Treasurer likes them very much. The amazing thing is that this State Treasurer is in a better position, probably, than is any other State Treasurer to get the State through.

The Treasurer claims that he has done good house-keeping, but I say that he has been selling off South Australia's assets to get us through. These unpalatable facts cannot be ignored; distorting and embroidering them for political purposes, which is what is happening opposite, does not change them in the long term. The Treasurer cannot run away from that. The present doleful picture painted in this present statement is a totally dishonest and deceitful approach.

The Treasurer was not willing to criticise or condemn an obviously uncertain and therefore extremely dangerous situation for South Australia last year, but this year he is only too willing to condemn the certainty, which although he does not like it in general terms, is still better than the actual position last year. Cuts in our expectations of funds have had to be made, because of the federal situation; one cannot get away from that. At least this time we know where, and by how much, and we know exactly what the cuts are.

Many South Australians do not realise (and some journalists seem very gullible, too, and Government members have brainwashed themselves into believing it) that many of the cuts in expenditure that have been loudly condemned by those people and blamed on the present Federal Government, in fact resulted from action by the Whitlam Government. It is about time we got those facts straight. This misapprehension has been deliberately encouraged by

members opposite, but they will learn in good time that they cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

Let us examine again the 1975-76 Loan Estimates statement. It was brought in just before the Hayden Budget was introduced, and I said at the time, "The South Australian Government would have avoided much embarrassment had it waited to see exactly what its Commonwealth colleagues were going to give it." The uncertainties of the Treasurer were well justified in several areas. In connection with housing, the 1975-76 Loan Estimates document (at page 7) states:

As to the special funds for welfare housing in 1975-76, it is not yet known what amount the Australian Government intends to allocate to the State for this purpose.

In fact, the Treasurer received from the Whitlam Government exactly the same amount in 1975-76 as he received in 1974-75, and at least this year the Treasurer has been told by the Fraser Government exactly what its proposals for housing will be. There has been no deception or uncertainty. We know exactly where we stand. We may not like it: I do not like it, but it is a positive situation. At least we know what it is all about, and it will make the State's Loan Estimates a much better picture of the real situation this year than it was last year in relation to the Treasurer's embroidery.

Let us examine the next item, namely, the railways. It was said that funds were needed for the electrification of the Christie Beach railway, but those funds were not received. That was the Whitlam Government. For the Monarto Development Commission, the State was seeking about \$9 000 000 from the Federal Government, but when the Budget was introduced the State received only \$500 000.

Mr. Allison: That's quite a difference.

Dr. TONKIN: That is a significant difference, and a significant cut-back made by the Whitlam Government. I did not hear any screams of anguish. Concerning the Land Commission, I refer to page 16 of last year's document and quote the Treasurer again, as follows:

A request has been made to the Australian Government for assistance of \$24 000 000 towards this programme. However, in light of budgetary problems being experienced by that Government, we do not expect to receive the full amount requested and the planned programme may need to be adjusted to accord with funds available.

As it turned out, the State received only \$14 900 000—a decision of the Whitlam Government.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: What are we getting this year? What is the Fraser Government's decision? Do tell us?

Dr. TONKIN: I will deal with the subject in my own good time, and I do not need prompting from the Minister. All I am saying is that at least at this stage it is known how much we will get, and the Treasurer can plan accordingly, if he is able to do so. These are all areas in which the Whitlam Government cut back grants to South Australia; yet, these facts have been deliberately obscured or distorted by this Government for political purposes. It is a patently dishonest attitude, and part of a campaign to denigrate the Liberal Party generally. I make the point: how can we expect high standards of behaviour in the community at large when the Government is deceitful and deals in half truths?

I will refer to a few more points, the first being urban public transport. The Treasurer has attempted to blame the Fraser Government for going back on a Whitlam Government undertaking to help finance the 310 Volvo buses the State has contracted to purchase. I refer now to the Supplementary Estimates on June 8, 1976: as regards urban public transport, the Treasurer said:

Urban public transport is the area hardest hit by the decision of the Commonwealth Government to cut previously planned expenditure heavily. We have entered into contracts for the supply of urgently needed buses in the expectation that the special urban public transport programme would continue and that the State would be able to attract two-thirds of the cost of those buses in accordance with the established arrangements for that programme. Under the main contracts (those for the purchase of 310 Volvo bus chassis and bodies) the total outlay will be over \$20 000 000.

The Treasurer went on to say that we would receive \$8 000 000 in 1975-76 and \$1 300 000 in 1976-77. In this example once again the Treasurer has been using half truths, because he received no undertaking from either Mr. Whitlam or Mr. Jones (the Federal Minister) that this contract would be accepted as an approved project under the urban public transport programme. For this reason, he cannot imply that Fraser was reversing a Whitlam decision. The State Government (and this is the lesson that I am certain everyone else knows) should not enter into contracts until it is positive of how it can finance them, and it should have been made clear by the Government's colleagues when in office, as has been made clear to it from the present Federal Government, when funds are not to be available.

I refer to education, which was a matter of some embarrassment to the Treasurer only last week. There has been a 16 per cent increase in money terms for primary and secondary school funds from the Federal Government, or a real increase of about 4 per cent. The Government is politicking when it suggests that the tight situation created by the Commonwealth Government has forced a re-examination of the school-building programme for 1976-77. Expenditure on new works will total \$7 900 000, and this is in direct contradiction to another of the Treasurer's irresponsible statements that only \$2 000 000 worth of new works could be commenced because of Federal Government cut-backs. The Treasurer made that statement on July 21, 1976, and when the Minister of Education was challenged on this subject in the House last week he was obviously embarrassed, and did the best he could to cover up for the Treasurer, but he did not do it very well.

Finally, and as a last example, I refer to transport and the increases in vehicle registration and drivers' licence fees. The Minister of Transport has tried to blame the increases on cut-backs from the Federal Government, when he had already announced that the increases would apply, I think, as long ago as February, 1976. The whole situation is far from satisfactory, and it has been compounded by similar irresponsible statements made by the Treasurer and other Government members.

Predictions that workers at Islington would be retrenched were quite untrue. Doubts expressed that the Adelaide to Crystal Brook railway would not proceed were quite unfounded. Revival of doubts on the validity of the railways agreement made in the past few days were quite unjustified, and indeed, could have been checked easily before they were published and blown up into a storm in a tea-cup by the Treasurer. Similarly, in the episode yesterday on apprenticeship training, the position could have been checked without the Treasurer making the maximum possible political mileage out of it he could, bearing in mind that it was a confidential document. I understand that Mr. Street yesterday issued the following statement:

"Reports that the Commonwealth Government intended to reduce its financial contribution to apprentice training are totally unfounded," Mr. Street said today. On the contrary, the Government is extremely concerned at the recent fall-off in the intake of apprentices. Accordingly, in addition to maintaining the Commonwealth's commitment in

this field, I have been investigating ways of increasing the funds available for apprentice training by involving other interested parties such as State Governments and employers of tradesmen. The objective is to increase the supply of skilled tradesmen so vital for Australia's future development.

That matter will not be discussed further and should not be discussed further in detail, until the Ministers of the various States meet with the Commonwealth Minister, and that is exactly the way it should be.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You would support an increase in pay-roll tax, would you?

Dr. TONKIN: That is an example of what was done yesterday, because there was no suggestion that there would be any increase in pay-roll tax.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Yes, there was.

Dr. TONKIN: Other than from the Treasurer, that there would be any increase in pay-roll tax, as far as I know. That was a totally irresponsible move to make in relation to correspondence, which I am assured by the Federal Minister was confidential and is still confidential and which he refused to discuss with me. That is far more than the Treasurer did when he ventilated the matter publicly. The whole of the Treasurer's statement must be read in the context of this Government's bitter, vituperative, and unscrupulous attack on the Federal Government: an attack in which it persists, despite the fact that it has been dealt with far more honestly and fairly by that Government than it ever was by the Whitlam Government. The real blame lies with the Whitlam Government. The Treasurer summarised the position in a statement in the House on August 26, 1975 (*Hansard* p. 437) by saying:

As to Loan Account and housing, the specific purpose grants and loans included in the Australian Government's Budget are less in some areas than we had expected and had planned on. It is clear that activity in housing and school building will have to be held below levels considered desirable by the State Government.

This was the first time after the introduction of the Hayden Budget that the Treasurer made any comment at all about the Whitlam Government's failure to face up to its promises.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: That's not true.

Dr. TONKIN: Even then the Treasurer did not attack or blame his Whitlam Government colleagues in any way. He simply accepted the situation for what it was and said, "Let us get on with the job." I am saying that that is what we should be doing now, because he is in even a better position to do it. In the light of all these facts and contradictory statements of Government members, how can the Treasurer possibly retain his credibility if he continues to blame the present Commonwealth Government instead of the Whitlam Government, which by his statement he clearly acknowledges is really to blame for the situation?

How can the Treasurer continue to criticise tax-sharing proposals that he himself publicly advocated two years ago to members of his Party, and still retain his credibility?

Mr. Becker: What credibility?

Dr. TONKIN: True, what credibility does the Treasurer still have? Perhaps he believes that untruths, or half truths, if repeated often enough, and given enough coverage by the media, will fool the people long enough to get him through the next election. If he does, he will find it is a vain hope. The people of South Australia are not fools.

Apart from the politicking and forecasts of doom, and the attempt to shift the real blame for the economic situation from the Whitlam Administration, the Bill is a realistic one, clearly recognising the real situation, and

taking full consideration of the two major advantages we have. The first, common to all States, is that we have been dealt with honestly, and know exactly what to expect from the Federal Government.

The second advantage, which is of particular importance to the Treasury of South Australia, is the financial effects of the railways and Medibank agreements. These additional funds have given the Treasury much more flexibility to cope with the present financial stringencies and difficulties and this can be seen in this document. The fact that certain of the State's capital assets have been disposed of is, of course, another matter. As this matter has been ventilated in this House before, I am sure it does not have to be ventilated again.

In reply to a question of the Treasurer by the media recently about what would be South Australia's financial position without the railways agreement, he is reported to have replied, "Disastrous." Certainly, I have to agree with that. It would be hard indeed for us to get through our present difficult times without that money. However, we have excellent officers in the Treasury and, under their guidance, I am certain that we could have done so. I pay a tribute to those officers: South Australia is well served. These officers would have been able to deal adequately with the situation, without those surplus funds being available.

However, the presence of these additional funds has tended to cloud the overall budgetary position. It certainly is unusual to be considering the bolstering up of Loan Account from general revenue, although I think this happened last year, too. Even here, a specific emphasis has been created because of the Treasurer's timing of certain of his transfers of funds.

The figures show that estimated expenditure proposals for 1976-77 aggregate nearly \$262 600 000, compared with actual payments of \$271 600 000 in 1975-76. At first glance these figures give a misleading impression of the true position. At first glance it seems that there has been an expected cut-back in the total programme of about \$9 000 000. However, it is a misleading impression, because there was a special appropriation in 1975-76 from Revenue Account of about \$20 000 000, which was finally allocated for housing late in the financial year, after the Loan Council meeting. If we deduct the \$20 000 000 from the actual payments in 1975-76 of \$271 600 000, we get \$251 600 000. Thus the expected 1976-77 programme is increased by \$11 000 000 over last year, rather than a reduction of \$9 000 000.

Mr. Allison: And we are holding \$50 000 000 in reserve.

Dr. TONKIN: Yes. If the Treasurer had left \$20 000 000 in the Revenue Account until July 1, 1976 (which would have given us a surplus of about \$22 300 000 instead of the \$2 300 000 announced), and then transferred the \$20 000 000 to the Loan Account, this would have given figures of \$251 600 000 for the past financial year and \$282 600 000 for the coming financial year. The Treasurer could have done this if it had suited his purposes and if he was not so desperately trying to find ways and means of proving that South Australia was being hard done by, by the Federal Government. Then we would have had a true picture of the situation, showing an increase from \$251 000 000 to \$282 000 000, a significant increase in keeping with the normal progression of the affairs of the State.

However, the Treasurer did not choose to do that, because it did not suit his purpose. The whole point of the exercise is to show how misleading it is to compare

the total amounts involved in the programme over the past two years against projected amounts. It all depends on the timing of the transfers—when transfers are made from Revenue Account to Loan Account. I agree with the Treasurer (and I do not agree with him often) when he says that it is necessary to look at the State's overall financial position rather than looking at either the Revenue Account or Loan Account in isolation. He notes that we should think of allocations from revenue to support capital programmes. Certainly, this is a reversal of form that has become common in past years. The Treasurer estimated in last year's Budget a balanced result on Revenue Account for the year. Because of lower than predicted increases in wages and costs of goods and services, as well as greater than expected tax collections (and members should not let anyone say that South Australia is amongst the lowest taxed States in the Commonwealth, as it is one of the two most highly taxed States in the Commonwealth on a State basis), these tax collections were \$6 000 000 greater than had been expected. We had the situation last year, as the member for Mount Gambier indicated, of a surplus of nearly \$58 000 000.

In June, the Treasurer transferred about \$55 000 000 into other areas, leaving a surplus of \$2 300 000 on Revenue Account. In last year's Loan Estimates, the Treasurer predicted a balanced result, but in fact he incurred a \$10 800 000 deficit, which has resulted in an accumulated deficit of \$8 900 000 at June 30, 1976. The Treasurer's proposal to allow the \$8 900 000 deficit on Loan Account to remain unrecouped during 1976-77 and to endeavour to make it good over the succeeding two years is probably basically sound and the only thing he can do. I am not sure it is a decision he has taken; I rather suspect it is a decision that has been forced on him.

The Treasurer estimates he will be able to transfer another \$15 000 000 from the Revenue Account to the Loan Account during 1976-77 to enable him to balance the results for 1976-77 and still maintain the accumulated deficit of \$8 900 000. Of course, this depends entirely on the figures that the Opposition will not see until the Budget is introduced next month. Until the Budget is introduced, we do not know the position and we have no way of telling whether these aims can be realised.

The whole budgetary position, with both Loan and General Revenue Accounts becoming more interdependent, will continue to benefit South Australia and provide a greater flexibility for our finances under the current Federal-State financial arrangements for tax sharing. The specific items that complete this document will be dealt with in greater detail by my colleagues, both in debate and in Committee. I support the Bill. I can only say that I wish the document, which, as it obviously first appeared from the Treasury, was a true and realistic reading of the situation, had not been embroidered so much by the Treasurer for purely political purposes.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I support the Bill because really it is traditional to do so, but I do not wish that in any way to be construed as supporting some of the statements that the Treasurer makes in his explanation. We have become accustomed to these becoming political documents rather than simply Treasury statements, and we would be surprised, to put it mildly, if we did not find there were political statements being made by the Treasurer in speeches like this.

Some of his comments are a little more moderate than we find from time to time in past speeches, of which he has obviously been the chief writer. Nevertheless, there are

several statements in this explanation that deserve comment. We have to look at the whole of this loan programme, of course, in the economic climate prevailing not only in South Australia but throughout Australia. The Treasurer, of course, cannot have it both ways. He acknowledges (and his Minister in charge of housing certainly acknowledges) that inflation is one of the major problems bedeviling this country at present. The Minister in charge of housing publicly acknowledges the fact that our building programmes have been affected most dramatically by inflation, and yet we have not heard the Treasurer, the Minister in charge of housing, or any other economic brain in the Government come out with any rational programme for combating inflation.

It is in the context of the overall economic difficulties in Australia that we must view this Loan Estimates programme. The Treasurer goes to great pains in all these speeches to draw attention to the parsimony of the Federal Government. We were hoping to get allocations in certain directions, but there have been some cut-backs. Obviously, they have not been as severe as one would have expected in some directions. The Government wants it both ways. It wants the Commonwealth to come to terms with inflation, although it does not often admit that openly, and yet it wants more and more Commonwealth funds to flow into State programmes, such as the present loan programme.

Let me remind Government members briefly of the financial difficulties which loom up in front of this country and which are so serious. Let me quote from some information that has come from Mr. Lynch recently as to the Budget deficits that still obtain in the Federal sphere. This statement has come from the Federal Treasury. It was estimated that the Budget deficit was shaping up to be about \$4 700 000 000 during the time of the Whitlam Administration. Some fairly tough decisions obviously had to be made, but the position is still far from rosy. The statement includes the following:

The Treasurer was commenting on the release of the Budget outcome figures for 1975-76. Total outlays amounted to \$21 859 000 000, or \$56 000 000 less than the original Budget estimate. Total receipts amounted to \$18 273 000 000, or \$843 000 000 less than the Budget estimate. There was a deficit of \$3 585 000 000 compared with the Budget estimate of \$2 798 000 000.

The point I highlight there is that the original Hayden Budget estimate was \$2 798 000 000. At the time of the demise of the Whitlam Administration, this deficit was heading for \$4 700 000 000. As a result of the measures instituted by the Fraser Administration, it was curtailed to \$3 585 000 000. In anyone's language, Australia is still in dire economic circumstances; we are still in a disastrous financial situation.

The conclusions to be drawn are that the position has improved. We have improved by about \$1 100 000 000 on what the Budget deficit was estimated to be towards the end of last year. There has been a significant improvement. A sum of \$1 100 000 000 is a tremendous improvement, but the situation is still far from rosy. The current deficit in the year just completed was over \$3 500 000 000. The Treasurer and the Minister in charge of housing have acknowledged, though not too openly, that inflation is still a major problem in Governmental financing at the State level. Yet the Treasurer then carps about the economies that the Federal Government is seeking to make to come to terms with this deficit, which is a significant factor in the inflation rate. For him to make the sort of statement made in this explanation is pure humbug and hypocrisy; there are no other words to describe the attitude of the Government.

South Australia is managing to proceed, in my judgment, in this economic climate fairly satisfactorily with the money that has been made available from Canberra. In the explanation, the Treasurer states:

The expenditure proposals in that schedule aggregate nearly \$262 600 000 compared to \$271 600 000 of actual payments in 1975-76.

That is slightly misleading, because the original Estimate for last year was \$241 500 000. The fact is that the actual payments were about \$30 000 000 in excess of what was estimated. We cannot conclude too safely from that initial statement that we are facing a cut in the real expenditure on the loan programme, because the expenditure last year was well in excess of the original estimate. That could well prove to be the case again this year, so that we do not take that initial statement as having any great relevance to the picture that will emerge at the end of the ensuing financial year.

The Treasurer acknowledges the dramatic effect of wage and salary increases on all sorts of Government projects. He discusses the Revenue Account in conjunction with the Loan Account because the two move hand in hand. In the past, we have been used to transfers from Loan Account to bolster the Revenue Account; money has been held in reserve for this very purpose. We have questioned this procedure whereby Loan money, on which interest is paid, is held aside to match deficits in the Revenue Account. Now the boot is on the other foot, and money is being held from Revenue Account for Loan works. There has been a fairly dramatic change in emphasis on the financial accounts of the State in the past two or three years.

Reference is made to the transfer of \$20 000 000 for urban public transport. Without offering any particular criticism, I point out that people have queried this matter with me. Many taxes are causing much hardship in rural areas, and this payment seems to have been singled out for mention by my constituents when they have been pressing the Government for taxation relief. Of course, the Government is quite insensitive to these pleas, and massive amounts of money are being transferred for purposes such as urban public transport, particularly to purchase a new set of buses.

I query the Government's priorities, when the Revenue Budget is in surplus and vast amounts have accrued to the State as a result of a fortuitous and rather unreal railways deal. The Government is seeking to transfer much of these surpluses for programmes such as I have mentioned, but it is not sensitive to the pleas of people suffering real hardship because of the State's taxation level. This is the sort of thing that the Treasurer says in his explanation:

If one has regard to the facts that the total of payments on Loan Account in 1975-76 was \$271 600 000, that there remains an urgent need for further school and hospital buildings, for public transport facilities, for water and sewer extensions, and a host of other capital works, that there is a tragically high level of unemployment in the community, and that reductions in real capital expenditure by Government's must add to that national and personal problem of unemployment, then it can be seen readily that the planning by this Government of a capital programme limited to the new funds expected to become available, that is to say \$247 600 000, would be woefully inadequate. If we tried to hold expenditures to recoup some of the Loan deficit at June 30, 1976, the problem would be so much the worse . . .

This doleful picture is a direct result of two actions on the part of the Commonwealth Government: first, the decision to cut back on specific purpose loans and grants and, secondly, the decision to support an increase of only 5 per cent in general Loan Council programmes, despite increases in cost levels approaching 15 per cent a year.

I ask again what the State Government expects the Commonwealth to do, in the light of the financial situation facing this country, when the actual deficit on last year's operations was more than \$3 500 000. This sort of statement is churned out by the Government, criticising the Commonwealth for not coming to grips with our dire financial straits. The explanation then refers to housing, and states:

The Commonwealth-State housing agreement advances to the States money at concessional rates of interest and these are applied in the main for welfare housing.

I and other members are concerned that more and more people are being forced into what is termed welfare housing, under the impact of inflation, which we can attribute to the Whitlam Government. More alarming is what is happening regarding housing costs in South Australia. For many years, particularly during the years of the Playford Administration, the record of public and private housing in South Australia was by far the best in the Commonwealth. We had by far the cheapest housing in the Commonwealth. Young married people and other people could look forward to owning their own house, but now our situation is the worst in the Commonwealth. Figures given to me recently by Australia's largest firm of quantity surveyors show an alarming situation. The cost of building an average 13-square house in Adelaide last September was \$22 685, compared to \$18 800 in Perth, and about \$21 500 in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Non-residential building costs have always been lower in Adelaide than in the Eastern States (about 5 per cent lower than Melbourne, and 8 per cent lower than Sydney) but now they are on a par.

That is a most alarming trend, and that is what has happened under a Labor Administration in this State. Its record in housing has been woeful. Instead of being the cheapest State in regard to housing and the State with the best record in housing, we are now the State with the most expensive housing for the average house that I have mentioned. That disgraceful situation has emerged here as a result of Labor Administrations.

The Government indicated when introducing the Loan Estimates last year the possibility of retrenchments in its work force. We have asked whether it would be more profitable to undertake some Government works by private contract rather than by day labour. I have asked the Minister of Works such questions in this House but I have got nowhere. He cannot justify his assertions that decisions are made on the basis of economics. I asked a question on this matter last week, but no satisfactory reply was forthcoming. He told me that I could go into the Government departments and dig around. That is a most unsatisfactory situation. Fortunately, the Government has not had to consider retrenchments, but the Public Service and the public sector in South Australia have grown far more rapidly in recent years than has the private sector.

I also wish to mention the reference to the Loan works programme in connection with the waterworks and sewers. There was an attempt (as there has been from time to time) by, I think, the Minister of Works to suggest that the money for water filtration would not be forthcoming from the Commonwealth. The Treasurer's explanation this year states:

The provision of waterworks and sewerage services continues to receive high priority. To finance the continuation of a major programme of works designed to meet the present and prospective needs of the State, we had contemplated the allocation of funds aggregating \$70 500 000 in 1976-77. This was in the expectation of receiving special Commonwealth grants and loans of \$9 400 000 for water

treatment and \$5 700 000 for sewerage works. The Prime Minister has now informed me that, of the \$50 000 000 to be available for sewerage works in Australia, only \$1 000 000 has been allocated to South Australia. This shortfall of \$4 700 000, a major setback to our expectations, has made necessary a recasting and reduction of our whole programme for water and sewerage works . . .

There was no acknowledgment in that statement that the funds for water filtration were forthcoming. About two months ago the Minister of Works sought to alarm the public of South Australia by suggesting that the money for the water filtration scheme would be cut off. We pointed out that he had not been reading the statements that had come from Canberra. I shall quote from a national press statement made by the Hon. Mr. MacKellar on behalf of the Government in outlining the Government's programme in various areas. In this statement, the Adelaide water treatment scheme rated a special mention, as follows:

The previous Government agreed to provide financial assistance to South Australia for a scheme to improve the quality of the water supply to metropolitan Adelaide. Some \$14 200 000 has already been provided over the past two years. Further assistance will be provided in 1976-77, up to the limit of the Commonwealth commitment to the project.

There are no strings attached there. The statement continues:

Latest information is that \$9 400 000 will be required. The departmental forward estimate proposed an additional \$5 000 000 to enable work to be commenced on the next stages of the scheme.

The Minister sought to embark on a political exercise to alarm the public by suggesting that it would not be possible to proceed with the scheme because the Commonwealth was cutting off the funds. I should like to see some acknowledgment that that money was coming from the Commonwealth. The two amounts have been mentioned: \$9 400 000 for water treatment and \$5 700 000 for sewerage works.

In South Australia, the sewerage works programme is far more advanced than are the programmes in other States. Under the national sewerage programme, the other States fared better than did South Australia. The only acknowledgment in the statement refers to a cut-back in the funds which it had been hoped would be forthcoming for the sewerage programme. There is no acknowledgment that \$9 400 000 was received for water treatment. The Government was trying to cast doubts publicly on the allocation of those funds from the Commonwealth. The conclusions are obvious. Where the Commonwealth Government has been generous (as it has been) and has honoured the promises of the Whitlam Government, as it undertook to do, it has received no thanks. The State Government has lived in expectation of funds coming to South Australia, an expectation that was quite unreal in the economic conditions prevailing, and when those expectations were not fulfilled all we got was criticism in the Treasurer's statement.

We are becoming sick and tired of the political flavour written into documents such as these, and we wish the Government would not try to have it both ways. Acknowledging that inflation is a major problem and that we still have a disastrous deficit in the Federal sphere, it should encourage the Commonwealth Government to come to terms with this inflation, and cut out the carping criticism delivered every time financial documents are placed before the House. I support the Bill.

Dr. EASTICK (Light): I support the Bill, which, like so many of its predecessors, is filled with less and less of

the total truth. If one goes back through the records of this House during previous Administrations, one can read into documents such as this one statements of fact which bear any scrutiny and which closely indicate the State's true financial position, whether it applied to Loan Account, Budget Account or the overall financial arrangements. Progressively, since 1970 one finds a document which is coloured according to the political whim of the Party in office (here the Australian Labor Party), and which does not give the people of the State, let alone members of this House, a complete and proper picture of the State's financial position.

One has merely to examine the manner in which the document has been prepared to see that during the 1975-76 financial year we spent a much larger sum than was spent in the previous financial year, this having been made possible by a far greater percentage of Commonwealth Government funds.

What is the truth of the matter? A far greater sum of money was spent in 1975-76, because weather conditions facilitated a more rapid advancement of various Government projects. By way of interjection recently, I indicated that work on the Little Para reservoir in the Hills east of Salisbury was about 11 months ahead of schedule. Obviously, therefore, the money that would otherwise have been spent on that project in 1976-77 must be included in expenditure for the previous year. For the Government to say that overall spending this financial year will be reduced because of pressures being exerted by the Commonwealth Government is just so much tommy rot, and, the sooner the people of this State are told the true position by the media, the better.

We cannot accept a situation in which the Government is permitted consistently to hide behind untruths and half truths, or in which the media consistently fails to publicise material other than Ministerial hand-outs. Many facets of the State's current financial affairs would not bear scrutiny and, indeed, urgently need a proper press investigation.

We have the peculiar situation involving jobs for the boys. It was referred to in the House earlier this week, but where has it been referred to in the media? Where has it been pointed out that the Government is willing to take on people who, for instance, have little or no local knowledge of matters relating to irrigation and the use of ground water? Certain people have been made panel members of one of this State's appeal boards. This has happened for the one reason that those persons happened to be the President and the Secretary of the Virginia and Two Wells branch of the Australian Labor Party. One of those gentlemen who until 1968 lived in Greece is now, I am pleased to know, an Australian citizen, yet people who have relied on water and water usage in this State since their boyhood have been denied the opportunity of proper and efficient representation on that important tribunal. That is a further example of the grave need to unravel the true facts relating to the financial affairs of this State. Those affairs will be unravelled only by persistent attack and investigation by people who are in a position not only to undertake the investigation but also to highlight what is found in that investigation.

When members of this House were invited to view the new Education Department building and the adjacent other new Government buildings (the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, the forensic science building and the motor vehicles building) it was indicated that those buildings were well ahead of schedule. Because those buildings are well ahead of schedule, more money has been spent on



them than would otherwise have been expected. Fortunately, in several ways, South Australia had the funds for these projects, but some of the projects were advanced by receiving more Commonwealth funds than South Australia could reasonably here expect.

In 1976-77, South Australia must live within its means and suffer the consequence of the extravagant over-expenditure provided for by the Whitlam Government. The Treasurer made great play about how we in South Australia were being advantaged so far as Monarto and the Land Commission were concerned because South Australia had legislation that allowed it to use Commonwealth funds in those areas. The Treasurer was told when he bragged and boasted about this legislation and about how it was allowing him to accept additional Commonwealth funds, that there would be a day of reckoning and that the advances made to South Australia would have to be equated against the sum South Australia could expect to obtain in subsequent years. An excellent example of that situation is contained on page 11 of the document we are considering where it deals with Murray River weirs, dams, locks, etc. The Federal Government's commitment over a period was \$8 800 000. Because the Federal Whitlam Government advanced to the State more funds than were due (it advanced \$6 925 000), South Australia will, to make up the balance, receive only \$1 875 000 this financial year. The balance of the commitment, \$6 834 000, will be made up by the State's own financial facilities.

This is an example of the Government's spending money that it knew did not really belong to it and later crying that the Commonwealth's commitment had been cut back, when funds had not really been cut back. The State Government is being called to task to balance what was a commitment made to it. That situation applied in relation to funds poured into buying land at Monarto. The Government then squealed in reverse because only \$500 000 was made available for 1975-76 by the Whitlam Government. Of course that was all that was made available, because prior to 1975-76 we had received far greater sums than were our due, under arrangements made by the Whitlam Government with South Australia. Without the Treasurer's relating the figures in the document to reality, we will be consistently told that the Federal Government has failed South Australia. However, I genuinely believe that the Federal Government is playing fair with every State.

I realise that all the States make up the Commonwealth of Australia, and there is therefore no room for playing one State against another, as the Whitlam Government tried to do when it suited its purpose to try to get State Governments of its own political persuasion elected. We saw an instance of this in the announcements, made before the last Western Australian election, about sums that would be spent in that State. However, the people of Western Australia were able to see through the folly of the announcements, and they voted in a way that showed their concern about the mismanagement in Canberra at that time. They showed that they were not willing to be bought off by promises of financial benefit.

In South Australia, we went very close at the last election to showing the Federal Government that the people of this State were not willing to be bought, that they were not willing to accept the sudden finding of funds for South Australian projects that were really an advance of funds previously acknowledged, and that they were not willing to accept the situation that large grants could be made available from the Commonwealth without being felt by people here. Of course they would be felt because, if the money is not raised by State taxation, it

will be raised by Commonwealth taxation. In regard to the new Commonwealth-State financial arrangements, the Treasurer stressed that we would not receive so much by way of tied grants. He says that the Commonwealth will deny assistance in certain basic social areas and other areas of need. He would have us believe that he thinks that the Commonwealth Government can provide the same money twice. If money is given by way of non-committed grants for the State to determine its own priorities, how can we expect the Commonwealth Government also to provide tied grants?

We found ourselves in a ridiculous situation during the last year of the Whitlam regime, when 62 per cent of the additional money coming to the State was by way of tied grants and often for projects not necessarily high on this State's priority list. There is an overall increase in the sum being made available to each State, and that increase is to be apportioned as each State itself shall determine.

Last evening, the Minister for Planning clearly indicated that in Australia, particularly South Australia, there would be an inflation rate for 1976-77 considerably less than the inflation rate predicted for 1975-76. As a result of some aspects of the Hayden Budget and as a result of action by the present Commonwealth Government, we are beginning to come face to face with the realities of inflation and, hopefully, as a result of additional action in Canberra, inflation will be reduced, thereby permitting true growth and a better financial atmosphere.

No doubt Government members, like Opposition members, have been receiving from the British Consulate copies of statements that have been made by the new British Prime Minister and by his senior Ministers. Consistently stated in the statements by Mr. Callaghan and the other Ministers is the fact that, with greater productivity and a better appreciation of the part that trade unionism should and must play in a proper approach to the total affairs of the country (in this case England), inflation is winding down, productivity is increasing, the climate for advancement is improving, and markets that had been lost to the English people and English manufacturers are being recaptured. What is the situation in Australia? We are still reeling under the effects of an abandonment of financial responsibility and from a situation in which money was thrown around as if it could be printed at will, with no consideration of the consequences of a continuous outflow. We have a situation which, with the additional taxation measures being imposed by the South Australian Government, is causing great havoc in the South Australian industrial scene.

Mr. Evans: We are exporting jobs.

Dr. EASTICK: We are exporting jobs and pricing ourselves out of jobs. I do not suggest that South Australia is the only State with high taxation, but I make the point that in South Australia we are fast moving above the other States and, whilst we might revel in the statement that we are containing our unemployment by the introduction of State funds (and I welcome the fact that those funds are available), I point out to the Government that, because of the manner in which those funds are being expended, a job opportunity is being denied to one unemployed person in every six, because the State Government's requirement in this unemployment relief (namely, the provision of a job, but not so much a casual job) is that the person employed be paid at plus 20 per cent. So, one unemployed person in six is being denied the opportunity of a job under the expenditure of the funds being made available by the State Government.

The situation puts out of all reality the costing factor associated with work opportunity in the community. This situation is creating great concern to members of the community who genuinely want to be employed but who find themselves at a disadvantage by at least 20 per cent with their "mates" and by more than 20 per cent when it is recognised that in some instances the person is being given a false rating that automatically increases the amount he receives as his "basic" before the 20 per cent is added. A person completely unskilled at 18 years of age who is seeking employment might be elevated to the role of a builders labourer at a much higher rate than would apply if he were just a normal labourer. He then receives an additional 20 per cent and receives about \$178.50 a week, in comparison with an apprentice in full-time employment who, at the same age, probably receives a wage of about only \$89 to \$100 a week. The reality of this situation is extremely important if we are to come face to face with budgeting, getting value for the dollar, improving the employment situation in South Australia, and improving the opportunity for South Australian industry to maintain its export markets and increase its interstate markets. By setting trends like those to which I have just referred we are in no way able to provide a solid and sound basis for South Australian industry. There is much evidence of people moving from job to job to obtain these increased wage rates.

I now refer to the lines associated with the Education Department. Already we have found one of the difficulties and problems caused by taking regionalisation of responsibility away from overall and central consideration. An excellent publication has been circulated in some quarters dealing with the future educational requirements of the Munno Para district. This district includes places such as Hillbank, a large part of Elizabeth and Smithfield, and areas up towards the Gawler area. It also includes the area going across to Virginia and the outlying parts of Salisbury. This publication clearly indicates the potential or likely educational requirements of the district over a long period. However, it seems from discussions that I have had with responsible officers of the Education Department (and I acknowledge the assistance given to me by the Minister of Education in arranging those discussions) that, if an area is designated an interest area or responsibility area, a denial of consideration of requirements of a school in the immediately adjacent area results.

The Evanston Primary School is on the boundary between the Munno Para district and the Corporation of Gawler. Evanston Primary School provides for many Munno Para students. Notwithstanding that many students are currently attending that school, no mention is made in the forward planning for Munno Para that these students attend a school in the adjacent region.

Gawler High School is bursting at the seams with an enrolment of 1 350 students. I am pleased to see that \$1 250 000 has been made available in the Loan Estimates for extensions to that school, but it provides educational facilities for about 50 per cent of the Munno Para district, although it may be a lower figure because other students could be directed to the Smithfield High School. No mention is made in the forward programming of the effect of these students on high school facilities in adjacent areas. And, what is more, no consideration is given to the degree of growth taking place in those other areas that provide that already over-committed high school facility. So, in considering regionalisation and future plan-

ning, we must urgently consider the requirements of "across the border".

I suppose the Treasurer could smartly retaliate and say, "This is what I have been saying in respect of State borders for a long time", but I do not believe that any member on this side has denied the opportunity of a proper consideration of dual projects that embrace or pass over a State border. Certainly, when the Treasurer has talked of the green square in the South-East moving over as far as Portland in Victoria, nobody has screamed that consideration should not be given to a joint approach; but I want to make sure that that recognition of a joint approach must apply to the other planning requirements embraced in the various projects associated with this document.

Summarising quickly, I return to the fact that this document is a series of figures that give no true recognition of the financial affairs of this State. It has no regard to the sums of money that were outstanding at June 30. For instance, it does not pinpoint, nor will the Budget when it comes in pinpoint, the fact that \$188 000 worth of subsidy money for the Emergency Fire Services was not channelled through or paid out by June 30, as it should have been. This is indicated in the replies to Questions on Notice earlier this week. How many subsidies and sums of money related to contracts, how many moneys lying about in materials, are waiting to be put together into projects? What is the true financial state of South Australia?

It is only when we get on to a method of reporting and of accounting that takes into account amounts outstanding and stores in hand that we shall ever be able to come face to face with a realistic method of financial management acceptable not only to Parliament but also to the people of the State. I support the Bill.

Mr. GUNN (Eyre): I shall make only a brief contribution to this debate. First, I comment on the last few remarks of the member for Light in discussing the financial accountability of this Government. Every member on this side, and many people in South Australia, would like the Treasurer to state clearly, exactly what is South Australia's financial position. For example, they would like to know exactly what the financial position is in relation to the transfer of the South Australian railways. One could go on at great length about what the Treasurer should account for. How much money will the taxpayers of this State have to pay towards the Treasurer's dream of Monarto, the city that never was, as the member for Davenport once pointed out? Obviously, it is a figment of the Treasurer's imagination, and it will be an expensive figment. It will have a grave effect on other country towns in this State that should have more money spent on them.

It is obvious that the Treasurer has realised that, since his Federal colleagues torpedoed the proposal last year, if ever he hopes to finance this project he will have to raise the funds from the people of this State, by getting his greasy hands on the State Bank and on the Savings Bank; and the Leader of the Opposition has rightly drawn that matter to the attention of the people of this State. It always is interesting to note the Treasurer's reaction. When he is trying, in this House, to pull the wool over the eyes of the people, he puts on a display that would be more fitting in the building north of Parliament House. The people are starting to understand those actions.

It is obvious from reading the explanation that the Treasurer did not want to sheet any blame home to the Whitlam Government for the financial mess that the present Commonwealth Government inherited from that Labor Government. He said nothing about the financial

chaos that the Fraser Government had inherited. It is clear from the documents before us that this Government does not want to have to account for its financial actions. It wants the Commonwealth Government to say, "We will give you so much money and tell you how to spend it." It does not want to be in the position where the Commonwealth Government says, "We will give you a certain amount and you will accept responsibility for spending it."

A socialist Government would not want to do that, but a Government should be open with the people. It should not drastically increase State taxation as it has done since 1970, probably by more than 250 per cent, but the Government is still increasing taxation. The explanation points out that the State has received more revenue than was expected, yet the Government has done little or nothing to alleviate the problems. People are starting to realise that the new federalism programme of the Fraser Government, which will be in office for many years to come, is one of the best schemes of Commonwealth-State relations that has been introduced. If the Dunstan Government does not want to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government, we will. This State Government also does not seem to be concerned about inflation. I thought it would be interesting to quote what Arthur Burns, a world-famous economist and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System of the United States, points out in an Institute of Public Affairs publication, under the heading "Inflation, Everybody's Responsibility." Burns states:

No country that I know of has been able to maintain widespread economic prosperity once inflation got out of hand. If long continued, inflation at anything like the present rate would threaten the very foundations of our society.

Probably that is what Dr. Cairns and company had in mind. Another interesting publication is I.P.A. *Facts*, for December, 1975, to January, 1976. It deals with the attitude of people, a matter that we should all consider. Governments and politicians have promised people too much over the past few years. They have given people expectations that they will be given whatever they ask for, but they have not said that someone must pay.

Unfortunately, it is the taxpayer who pays, and taxpayers of this country will not again accept Governments that increase taxation and take more and more money from them. We on this side believe that the people can best spend their own money. The publication to which I have referred states:

The restoration of economic health, stability and progress in the year ahead will indeed depend more on the people themselves than on their Government.

There is a dual role: the Government must give the lead, and the people must be told of the position. I am confident that the Federal Budget to be brought down soon will be in the best interests of this nation. Those people who have a desire to work and to do something will be given the assistance and the incentive they deserve.

Last evening, with my colleague the member for Rocky River, I attended a meeting at which the Labor Party was represented by the Hon. Norman Foster, M.L.C., and which related to closing certain railway services in the North of South Australia. The discussion clearly indicated that the Treasurer and the Whitlam Government had failed to negotiate properly the various agreements. Legislation had been passed in haste, and the necessary research had not been undertaken. Now, they are trying to tidy up the details, and attempting to blame the present Federal Government, especially the Minister for Transport (Mr. Peter Nixon). We have had instances of the Minister of

Transport in South Australia talking nonsense, not checking his facts, and basing his arguments on rumours that could not be substantiated. Fortunately, I have received a letter from the Minister for Transport to correct the situation.

I was interested to note the attitude of the Labor Party at last evening's meeting. Discussion revolved around subsidies for public transport. The Treasurer's statement has referred to the purchase of buses for the Bus and Tram Division, so the matter is relevant. The Hon. Mr. Foster made the point that, if it was acceptable to subsidise the *Troubridge* for the benefit of the people of Kangaroo Island, the rail services of the North of the State should be subsidised, too. I do not want those services closed, and I advised the people to contact Mr. Nixon by way of a deputation, and to discuss with him the possibility of upgrading the lines to standard gauge. The Hon. Mr. Foster said that one of the problems with Kangaroo Island was that people used alternative forms of transport. He said that the ketch trade was causing problems to the Government, and that legislation should be passed to put ketches off the sea. That was a most interesting statement, and I hope the message can be conveyed to the people of Kangaroo Island.

Mr. Venning: Where was he going to put the ketches?

Mr. GUNN: I do not think he was worried about them: he wanted to get rid of them. There would be no freedom of choice, and no right for the people to choose their means of transport. He would just get rid of them, and we have the *Troubridge*, with people being at the mercy of the Seamen's Union and the waterside workers.

Mr. Venning: Is he going to give the ketch owners superannuation?

Mr. GUNN: I do not know, but he was not worried about that. He made some comments about uranium that caused me to wonder how united is the Labor Party in this State in the matter of mining and development of our uranium resources. I shall be interested to hear the attitude of my friend, the member for Alexandra, in relation to those comments, and also what Commodore Virgo has to say about it. I would have expected such comments from the Hon. Mr. Dunford; it is more in his line to attack the people of Kangaroo Island. During the week I read some Australian Workers Union publications, and one item that I noticed was the branch secretary's report delivered by Mr. Jim Dunford on May 31, 1973. He started off the report with the word, "Comrades". I thought that was an interesting term, one not used in Australia: I thought it was more suited to the Soviet Union. In the report, Mr. Dunford referred to the benefits for workers in the Soviet Union, and said that they owned their own facilities. I did not think anyone owned anything there. We know the Hon. Mr. Dunford is a member of the extreme left, which runs the Labor Party. I thought that term "comrades" should be put into *Hansard* for the record.

I turn now to the problems of my district. I have raised in this House previously the difficulties faced by the people of Ceduna in relation to the building of a new area school. I am sorry that the former Minister of Education is leaving the Chamber, because at one stage he promised the people of Ceduna a new school. I should like to read a letter that the Murat Bay District Council wrote to the Minister of Education on July 23, a copy of which it sent to me. That letter states:

Dear Sir,

I hereby acknowledge and thank you for your letter of May 31, 1976, and contents noted. As the result of a council meeting I am to advise that council is disappointed to find that the replacement of the Ceduna

Area School is not listed as a top priority. You are urged to ensure that the replacement of the inadequate existing school is given top priority to enable construction of its replacement to commence as soon as possible.

It is appreciated that a new school can only be provided if sufficient funds are to hand or forthcoming, and any efforts that you may be able to give to ensure that finances are provided for this school will be more than welcomed by the community. Your co-operation is therefore sought on behalf of the community to ensure that the replacement of the Ceduna Area School is upgraded in priority to enable funds to be allocated immediately and construction commenced without delay.

I said last evening that this school is one of the most dilapidated schools in the State, if not the worst. Bearing in mind the number of students that attend the school and its size, teaching is made difficult. Administration is even more difficult because more than 50 small classrooms have been carted into the school from other schools that have closed. As other schools have been upgraded, their old classrooms have been sent to Ceduna. However, the town urgently needs a new school.

According to the Treasurer, finance is to be made available for effluent drainage systems in South Australia. On page 16 of his second reading explanation, the Treasurer said:

Effluent drainage, \$1 450 000—Payment of subsidies towards effluent drainage in 1975-76 totalled almost \$1 300 000. Ten district councils received assistance of varying amounts, including \$554 000 to Penola, \$433 000 to Loxton and \$111 000 to Clare. It is intended to make \$1 450 000 available for subsidies in 1976-77.

I have received many approaches from district councils in my district, especially from the Murat Bay and LeHunte District Councils. I received from the Murat Bay District Council a copy of a letter that Mr. G. J. Pfitzner, its District Clerk, sent to the Minister of Health on August 4. It is as follows:

Dear Sir,

I hereby acknowledge and thank you for your letter M.H.M. 119/76 of July 5, and contents noted. As the result of a council meeting I am to advise that council is appreciative that any subsidies provided are dependent upon the finances made available to the Minister of Local Government for such purposes.

An approach was first made to the Public Health Department in 1968 for assistance, and was informed that council would have to wait two years due to other commitments. On each occasion that council has approached that department, a standard blue-print reply that it will be two years before it can assist is forthcoming. In the meantime, costs are escalating at an exorbitant rate and apparently council's priority is going further down the list with other so-called towns being upgraded. It is obvious to council that its priority is being given the "brush off".

Council therefore urges you to assist in ensuring that its priority for subsidy purposes is upgraded to enable the Minister of Local Government to grant a subsidy to this council at the earliest opportunity. In addition, any assistance you may be able to give to ensure that the honourable the Treasurer sets aside additional funds for subsidy purposes of common effluent schemes would be more than welcomed by council. Thanking you in anticipation of your co-operation.

On the same day, the District Clerk wrote to the Treasurer: I think that was the correct action to take. I have had discussions with the Minister and the department regarding this matter, and, like the council, consider that the matter has dragged on far too long. In that letter, a copy of which was sent to me, the District Clerk said:

*re Subsidy—Common Effluent Scheme*

Dear Sir, In reference to the above I am to advise that this council has been endeavouring to have plans prepared to enable a subsidy to be obtained for a common effluent scheme in Ceduna and Thevenard, since 1968. The

assistance of the Public Health Department has been sought on various occasions since that time, but to date to no avail. Council is now prepared to obtain its own consultant to design same and prepare the necessary plans.

It is appreciative that any subsidies for this purpose are made available by the Minister of Local Government acting on the basis of a priority listed by the Department of Public Health. As any subsidy for this purpose is entirely dependent upon the funds available, you are urged to give urgent consideration to ensuring that additional funds are made available to the Minister of Local Government, to enable a subsidy to be made available to this council at the earliest opportunity. With costs escalating as they are at present, and, after considering council's geographical position, the longer any allocation of subsidy to it is postponed, the higher the subsidy would have to be in the future. Your urgent consideration for additional funds for subsidy purposes of common effluent schemes is therefore sought.

I hope sincerely that both the Minister of Health and the Treasurer will see their way clear to upgrade the priorities of this council. Likewise, I hope that they will do the same for the District Council of LeHunte, which is in a similar position. If these councils are to be upgraded, it is absolutely essential that they receive this money.

I believe that the funds allocated to Monarto should have been spent on the projects I have just outlined. As long as we continue with this expensive, unnecessary white elephant of a scheme that the Treasurer promotes, other existing country towns, including Port Pirie, the town you represent, Mr. Speaker, will be discriminated against. People living in those areas will not receive their right to be afforded the same sort of facilities that are available in the metropolitan area. As long as the Treasurer continues with his inflexible attitude, people in country areas can expect little or no assistance from this Government. We saw the irresponsible attitude of this Government when it gave away \$100 000 to the former Chairman of the Monarto Development Commission. That money would have more than paid for the effluent scheme at Ceduna and Thevenard in the LeHunte council area, and would have helped solve the problems at Coober Pedy to which I shall refer.

The Treasurer has yet to make available to the House the contracts for which we have asked. It is the height of financial irresponsibility and incompetency for this Government to adopt such an attitude. The sooner the people of this State are given the opportunity to pitch out the Government from the Treasury benches the better off the taxpayers of this State will be. The rantings and ravings of the Treasurer this afternoon are a clear example of his incompetence, which he displays each day. We know (and the people of this State are beginning to wake up to this fact) that the Treasurer is trying to get his slippery hands on people's savings in the Savings Banks of South Australia—a scurrilous situation. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT (Minister of Labour and Industry) moved:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. DEAN BROWN (Davenport): I wish to bring to the attention of the House and the people a matter of public importance that relates to a statement made yesterday by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (Mr. Street) regarding the disciplining of union members who worked during the recent Medibank strike. Since the Medibank strike there have been threats

and intimidations by some tyrannical trade union officials against their members who exercised their choice of going to work instead of going on strike. Numerous frightened members of trade unions have contacted me regarding threats made against them because they worked on that day of the Medibank strike. The threats generally included a \$30 fine, or expulsion from the union, or pressure to be applied to the employer for dismissal, or black bans to be imposed on the place of employment.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: Which union are you talking about?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I will come to that, if the Minister is patient. I wish to draw attention to two specific cases by quoting letters received by members of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union and the Australian Workers Union. The first letter, dated July 26, was sent to a member of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union. I will not mention the union member's name, for obvious reasons; if I did, the tyrannical people involved would pick further on these people. The letter states:

Dear Sir,

Please be advised that a charge has been laid against you under rule 56, part (i), subsection (b), in that you attended the Central Mail Exchange, Adelaide, for the purpose of working on the night shift on the night of Sunday, July 11, 1976, contrary to an express direction from the Federal Executive of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union. A copy of rule 56, including the rights available to you, is enclosed with this letter.

You are further advised that the State Executive has determined that charges will not be proceeded with in the case of any member who, within 14 days of the above date, deposits an amount equivalent to the gross pay for one day, with the union office, for payment to a nominated recognised public charity. If you fail to accept this offer within the time stated, you will be summoned before the State Executive, at a time and place to be notified to you, when the charge will be proceeded with, in the presence of (name deleted) the person laying the charge.

The letter is signed by F. K. Willis, the Secretary-Treasurer of the union. The second letter, concerning a member of the Australian Workers Union and dated August 2, states:

Dear Sir,

I have been informed that you failed to observe a decision made by the Executive Council of the Australian Workers Union on July 7, 1976, of which I enclose a copy together with a further instruction which was circulated to all representatives on that date and received by them no later than July 9, 1976, also objects of the Australian Workers Union as set out in constitution and general rules. I am enclosing a copy of rule 10 of constitution and general rules and rule 16 of the constitution and general rules of the Australian Workers Union and in your failure to observe the decision of Executive Council, you are in breach of rule 10 and, therefore, are subject to the penalty as set out in rule 16. You are advised that your failure to answer the charge made against you, in writing, within 21 days, will result in the matter being referred to the branch executive for a penalty to be imposed. The maximum fine for this offence is \$40. Further, you may request to appear before the branch executive to state your case at a date to be set.

That letter is signed by Allan S. Begg, the Branch Secretary.

Mr. Max Brown: Are those rules registered with the court?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Yes. I will come to that. It is clear under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act that the strike was illegal.

Mr. Max Brown: What strike, in your opinion, is not illegal?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The strike, under the State Act, was illegal.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: Come on!

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The Minister knows that, but he took no action whatever. In fact, his Government openly came out in favour of people who supported that illegal strike.

*Members interjecting:*

Mr. DEAN BROWN: One can therefore see the compromise by the State Labor Government, which came out and publicly advocated that people should participate in this illegal strike. Let the Minister deny that it was an illegal strike under State law.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: Of course it wasn't illegal. What are you talking about? Unions have the right to go on strike whenever they like.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Under section 147 of the State Industrial and Conciliation Act, the Minister knows that it was an illegal strike.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: You should learn something about industrial relations. Go and tell the workers that.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The Minister might care to read the Act.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: I suggest that you try to understand the workers.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Section 147 of the Act states that unless 14 days written notice was given to the Minister (and it could not possibly have been given in this case, because the whole strike was planned in less than 14 days), the strike was illegal. The Minister knows that, and his Government advocated that people should participate in that illegal strike. Many people went to work on the Monday of the Medibank strike, because they did not want to break Commonwealth or State law by participating in an illegal strike, as I have pointed out. The people being threatened are protected by the law, and should ignore the threats.

Union officials cannot take action against individuals for working according to the award, and that is important. These people who went to work were working according to the law and the award and, because they did that, union officials are now trying to penalise them, in one case by a fine of at least \$40. Some union officials are using the same tyranny, oppression, and exploitation as was used by employers in the coal mines of Britain 150 years ago. They are destroying the credibility of the trade union movement in Australia. I urge trade unions to remove such dictators from office within the unions, because their actions are anti-union, anti-good industrial relations in Australia, and anti-Australian.

*Members interjecting:*

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The State Government should be expected to act to protect these exploited individuals. However, the Premier has completely compromised his position by supporting an illegal strike. I congratulate those union officials who allowed a democratic choice in relation to the Medibank strike and who protected their members after the strike.

Mr. GROTH (Salisbury): I rise to express my concern at the ever-increasing unemployment figures throughout Australia. The July figures released by the Commonwealth Minister, Tony Street, show that there has been a dramatic increase in unemployment throughout the Commonwealth during the past five months. The number of unemployed in July was a frightful 270 286. By next Christmas and by the time the expected 250 000 school-leavers come on to the employment market, the number could increase to more than 400 000.

Mr. Evans: Only 250 school-leavers?

Mr. GROTH: It is all very well for the member for Fisher to voice his opposition. We know that the Opposition forces, in this House particularly, have blamed the Whitlam Government for the situation. However, the Fraser Government has been in office for about eight months, yet it has done nothing to boost the economy, and it does not intend to do anything. The only way the Fraser Government intends to bring about better economic conditions is to cause large-scale unemployment, and that it exactly what the Federal Government is doing today.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: It won't work, either.

Mr. GROTH: True, it will not work and it cannot work. I add my voice to that of the Labor spokesman reported in an article in yesterday's *Australian*. The report contains several interesting points, and states:

Seasonally adjusted figures, which show the trend of unemployment, have risen steadily in each of the past five months and (contrary to most press reports when the July figures were released last Friday) now stand at a record level of 315 257.

Mr. Evans: What do you mean by "seasonally adjusted"?

Mr. GROTH: I suggest that the honourable member ask Tony Street what he means by that term. I have referred to his press release, and that term is stated in it. The honourable member should ask Mr. Street, who should be able to tell him. Members on this side of the House know that these figures are not a true indication of the situation: they show the registered number of unemployed, but some people in the community do not desire to register as unemployed, so the true unemployment figure is greater than the figure given.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: It will be worse when school-leavers hit the market.

Mr. GROTH: When school-leavers hit the market, there will be over 400 000 unemployed. However, I am more concerned about what industry is trying to do to increase the number of unemployed people. Rather than putting more workers on, industry is presently encouraging its workers to increase their overtime hours. This does nothing to resolve the situation. I have risen in this debate to express my concern at the ever-increasing number of unemployed people. I hope that the Fraser Government in its wisdom will do something to reduce the number of unemployed people in this country.

Dr. EASTICK (Light): I rise to comment on the dire consequences that are unfolding in South Australia as a result of the failure of the State Government to give the necessary assistance and attention to the tourist industry. I refer especially to its failure to appoint a Director of Tourism and give the industry the type of drive that is so necessary from this source. I do not want it to be construed that I am suggesting that large sums of Government money be poured into private enterprise undertakings. What I am saying is that reasonable sums of Government money should be poured into the promotion of tourism in this State.

When I returned from overseas I indicated to the House that I found several overseas countries were moving away from the promotion of tourism beyond their borders. They were putting their funds into the promotion of tourism in their own country and in the case of Canada, in its own Provinces. It has been found that there is a much greater potential and monetary return from tourist promotion at home than from spending excessive sums on external promotion, which has been showing poor returns. I believe there must be a balance. Obviously we want the position in South Australia to be revealed to other

States; we want them to know, through film and other documentation, that there is a potential in South Australia. We want to see the advancement of the already excellent facilities in the Barossa Valley, on the southern coast, in the Flinders Ranges, at Port Lincoln, and in various other tourist spots that we have, but at present because of the failure of the Government to assist, the position is not being advanced. At the same time, the Government is off on a willy nilly course of chasing money for an international hotel of no value for South Australia in the foreseeable future. I base that opinion on the pronouncements available today in many documents relating to the Australian tourist industry. Indeed, one can read it against the statements applying to the tourist industry elsewhere. In *Tourism Australia*, dated November, 1973, issue No. 3, under the heading "Australian Tourist Commission Annual Report", we have a subheading "Fall in visitors causing concern". The article states:

The Australian Tourist Commission has told the Australian Government that the increase in the number of Australians going overseas and a slowing down in the number of tourists coming to Australia has adversely affected the competence and viability of the domestic Australian travel industry.

That is very true, even today. If we look at the recent report of the Chairman of Directors of the Grosvenor Hotel in the *News*, we see under the heading "Grosvenor facing 'serious' position" the following:

Grosvenor Hotel Limited is now facing a serious situation, and the Chairman, Mr. S. F. Heaslip, finds difficulty in showing any optimism under existing conditions.

Mr. Vandepier: They had one section closed down.

Dr. EASTICK: Yes, and in the body of this report they state:

On the occupancy rate, Mr. Heaslip said in South Australia the rate for the December quarter was 30.9 per cent, and for Australia it was 32.6 per cent.

The industry cannot maintain its place or advance its cause at 32.6 per cent. Certainly, it cannot advance it in South Australia at 30.9 per cent, and there is a rumour that one of the major hotels in this town on a recent evening had but one resident in it.

Whilst the Government is spending money in discussions with persons interested in an international hotel in South Australia to be built in Victoria Square, we have to look at the detail that has been given on several occasions by reputable persons who have studied the feasibility of international hotels, both in this and in other States where they have indicated without any qualms that the international hotel situation is oversubscribed in Australia at present, and that, with the problems of occupancy in all existing establishments, there is no immediate future (for 15 years or more) for additional international hotels in Australia.

Far from wanting to be a knocker, I have checked out the situation in Victoria and New South Wales, centres with international airports and which are tourist attractions as their names are known around the world, attracting large numbers of people. They have occupancy problems in their latest international hotels very similar to the figures that I have just quoted for one of our own prime hotels in this State. To try to impose upon the scene an additional facility of this nature will obviously not be a return and it will require a considerable amount of propping up from a State Government over and beyond the promises it has already made to people who would put their funds into this State to make it a viable concern. People who have considered the matter in detail have told the Government that the position for an international hotel, when one is built in South Australia, certainly is not in the Victoria Square area and that, having regard to maximum benefit and

accessibility to railways, airways and the various facilities (department stores and entertainment), the obvious site is in the area between Pulteney Street and Morphett Street, and between Waymouth Street and North Terrace. It may be said that not much difference in distance is involved between Waymouth Street and the southern end of Victoria Square, but the experts who have done a proper feasibility study for a project of this magnitude have recognised the significance.

A report to the Industries Assistance Commission, dated November 13, 1975, entitled "The Tourist Accommodation Industry, short term assistance", is worthy of consideration. Probably the most important matter in it is that urgent and serious consideration should be given to accepting that hotel or other general accommodation facilities should be considered as a service industry, in the same way as Australia Post and similar organisations are treated, by which they enjoy special assistance in respect of industrial awards and the conduct of the business. I ask the Government to say whether it is considering this as a proposition to advance tourism in South Australia and benefit accordingly.

Mr. SLATER (Gilles): The Australian people have been the victims of two conspiracies in the past 12 months. The first occurred on November 11, 1975, with the dismissal of a duly-elected Federal Government, and the second has occurred in the past 18 months, in regard to Medibank. The confusion in the minds of the people, as well as in the Government and the Opposition—

Mr. Evans: But you know how it will work.

Mr. SLATER: I do not. I do not think anyone in Australia can say how the health of the people will be catered for adequately in future. The present confusion exists because the Federal Government is being dictated to by probably the strongest organisation in Australia, namely, the Australian Medical Association.

Mr. Evans: Is it a union?

Mr. SLATER: It is an association of professional people. I would not describe it as a union. It is a strong group made up of people who have been able to influence the Federal Government to the detriment of the Australian people, who are confused about the situation in relation to Medibank and the private health funds. I directed a question today to the Minister of Health arising from

a statement by the General Manager of the Mutual Hospital Association of South Australia, reported in the press, denying that the private funds were using their reserves to undercut the Medibank system. The General Manager said that reserves in the private health funds were fairly minimal, and I am seeking from the Minister confirmation or otherwise of that situation. The press report states that only 2 cents a member is held in reserve for medical services and less than six hours in hospitalisation. This seems rather ludicrous, because I understand the association has about 260 000 members. If the fund is not sufficient to represent them adequately in a situation where many people might be requiring medical and hospital attention, it does not seem that the reserves are buoyant. I do not always agree with press reports and editorials; I am not biased, but I do not always agree. However, I find myself in some agreement with the editorial comments in today's *News*.

Mr. Becker: You're not allowed to read the Murdoch press.

Mr. SLATER: I do not know that it was directly responsible to Murdoch for this. The editorial, under the heading, "Not yet a healthy scheme", states:

The Federal Government was right in maintaining the principle of free choice in health insurance . . .

I am reminded of the innocuous advertisement sponsored on television by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

Mr. Evans: Do you get time to watch television?

Mr. SLATER: Rarely. However, I saw this innocuous advertisement with the three fingers, pointing out the three choices of medical insurance. The people are not being given a choice when we see that the private health schemes are undercutting Medibank. The editorial also states:

The Government has pledged that it will continue the Medibank scheme, and it must do so.

I concur heartily.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Motion carried.

At 5.24 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 17, at 2 p.m.